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THE

MISCELLANEOUS WORKS

OF

Oliver Goldsmith, M.B.

A NEW EDITION, IN SIX VOLUMES.

TO WHICH IS PREFIXED, SOME

ACCOUNT OF HIS LIFE AND WRITINGS.

VOLUME IV.

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LETTERS

FROM A

CITIZEN OF THE WORLD

TO HIS

FRIENDS IN THE EAST.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

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LETTERS

FROM A

CITIZEN OF THE WORLD

TO HIS

FRIENDS IN THE EAST.

LETTER LXXI.

From Lien Chi Altangi to Fum Hoam, first President of the Ceremonial Academy at Pekin, in China.

NOT far from this city lives a poor tinker, who has educated seven sons, all at this very time in arms and fighting for their country, and what reward do you think has the tinker from the state for such important services? None in the world; his sons, when the war is over, may probably be whipt from parish to parish as vagabonds, and the old man, when past labour, may die a prisoner in some house of correction.

Such a worthy subject in China would be held in universal reverence; his services would be rewarded if not with dignities, at least with an exemption from labour; he would take the left hand at feasts, and mandarines themselves would be proud to show their submission. The *English* laws punish vice, the *Chinese* laws do more, they reward virtue!

Considering the little encouragement given to matrimony here, I am not surprised at the discouragements given to propagation. Would you believe it, my dear *Fum Hoam*, there are laws made, which

even forbid the people's marrying each other. By the head of *Confucius*, I jest not; there are such laws in being here; and yet their law-givers have neither been instructed among the *Hottentots*, nor imbibed their principles of equity from the natives of *Anamaboo*.

There are laws which ordain, that no man shall marry a woman against her own consent. This though contrary to what we are taught in *Asia*, and though in some measure a clog upon matrimony, I have no great objection to. There are laws which ordain that no woman shall marry against her father and mother's consent, unless arrived at an age of maturity; by which is understood those years, when women with us are generally past child-bearing. This must be a clog upon matrimony, as it is more difficult for the lover to please three than one, and much more difficult to please old people than young ones. The laws ordain, that the consenting couple shall take a long time to consider before they marry; this is a very great clog, because people love to have all rash actions done in a hurry. It is ordained that all marriages shall be proclaimed before celebration; this is a severe clog, as many are ashamed to have their marriage made public, from motives of vicious modesty, and many afraid from views of temporal interest. It is ordained, that there is nothing sacred in the ceremony, but that it may be dissolved to all intents and purposes by the authority of any civil magistrate. And yet opposite to this it is ordained, that the priest shall be paid a large sum of money for granting his sacred permission.

Thus you see, my friend, that matrimony here is hedged round with so many obstructions, that those who are willing to break through or surmount them must be contented, if at last they find it a bed of thorns.

The laws are not to blame, for they have deterred the people from engaging as much as they could. It is indeed become a very serious affair in *England*, and none but serious people are generally found willing to engage. The young, the gay, and the beautiful, who have motives of passion only to induce them, are seldom found to embark, as those inducements are taken away, and none but the old, the ugly, and the mercenary, are seen to unite, who if they have posterity at all, will probably be an ill-favoured race like themselves.

What gave rise to those laws might have been some such accidents as these. It sometimes happened that a miser who had spent all his youth in scraping up money to give his daughter such a fortune as might get her a mandarine husband, found his expectations disappointed at last, by her running away with his footman: this must have been a sad shock to the poor disconsolate parent, to see his poor daughter in a one-horse chaise, when he had designed her for a coach and six: what a stroke from Providence! to see his dear money go to enrich a beggar: all Nature cried out at the profanation!

It sometimes happened also, that a lady who had inherited all the titles, and all the nervous complaints of nobility, thought fit to impair her dignity and mend her constitution, by marrying a farmer; this must have been a sad shock to her inconsolable relations, to see so fine a flower snatched from a flourishing family, and planted in a dunghill; this was an absolute inversion of the first principles of things.

In order therefore to prevent the Great from being thus contaminated by vulgar alliances, the obstacles to matrimony have been so contrived, that the rich only can marry amongst the rich, and the poor, who

would leave celibacy, must be content to increase their poverty with a wife. Thus have their laws fairly inverted the inducements to matrimony. Nature tells us, that beauty is the proper allurement of those who are rich, and money of those who are poor; but things here are so contrived, that the rich are invited to marry by that fortune which they do not want, and the poor have no inducement, but that beauty, which they do not feel.

An equal diffusion of riches through any country ever constitutes its happiness. Great wealth in the possession of one stagnates, and extreme poverty with another keeps him in unambitious indigence; but the moderately rich are generally active: not too far removed from poverty to fear its calamities, nor too near extreme wealth to slacken the nerve of labour, they remain still between both in a state of continual fluctuation. How impolitic therefore are those laws which promote the accumulation of wealth among the rich, more impolitic still in attempting to increase the depression on poverty.

Bacon, the English philosopher, compares money to manure; if gathered in heaps, says he, it does no good; on the contrary, it becomes offensive. But being spread, though never so thinly, over the surface of the earth, it enriches the whole country. Thus the wealth a nation possesses must expatiate, or it is of no benefit to the public; it becomes rather a grievance where matrimonial laws thus confine it to a few.

But this restraint upon matrimonial community, even considered in a physical light, is injurious. As those who rear up animals take all possible pains to cross the strain in order to improve the breed: so in those countries, where marriage is most free, the inhabitants are found every age to improve in stature and in beauty; on the contrary, where it is confined

to a *cast*, a *tribe*, or an *horde*, as among the Gaurs, the Jews, or the Tartars, each division soon assumes a family likeness, and every tribe degenerates into peculiar deformity. Hence it may be easily inferred, that if the mandarines here are resolved only to marry among each other, they will soon produce a posterity with mandarine faces; and we shall see the heir of some honourable family scarcely equal to the abortion of a country farmer.

These are a few of the obstacles to marriage here, and it is certain, they have in some measure answered the end, for celibacy is both frequent and fashionable. Old bachelors appear abroad without a mask, and old maids, my dear *Fum Hoam*, have been absolutely known to ogle. To confess in friendship; if I were an Englishman, I fancy I should be an old bachelor myself; I should never find courage to run through all the adventures prescribed by the law. I could submit to court my mistress herself upon reasonable terms; but to court her father, her mother, and a long tribe of cousins, aunts, and relations, and then stand the butt of a whole country church; I would as soon turn tail and make love to her grandmother.

I can conceive no other reason for thus loading matrimony with so many prohibitions, unless it be that the country was thought already too populous, and this was found to be the most effectual means of thinning it. If this was the motive, I cannot but congratulate the wise projectors on the success of their scheme. Hail, O ye dim-sighted politicians, ye weeders of men! 'Tis yours to clip the wing of industry, and convert Hymen to a broker. 'Tis yours to behold small objects with a microscopic eye, but to be blind to those which require an extent of vision. 'Tis yours, O ye discerners of mankind, to lay the line between society, and weaken that force by dividing, which

should bind with united vigour. 'Tis yours, to introduce national real distress, in order to avoid the imaginary distresses of a few. Your actions can be justified by an hundred reasons like truth, they can be opposed by but a few reasons, and those reasons are true.

LETTER LXXII.

From Lien Chi Altangi to Hingpo, by the way of Moscow.

AGE that lessens the enjoyment of life increases our desire of living. Those dangers, which, in the vigour of youth, we had learned to despise, assume new terrors as we grow old. Our caution increasing as our years increase, fear becomes at last the prevailing passion of the mind; and the small remainder of life is taken up in useless efforts to keep off our end, or provide for a continued existence.

Strange contradiction in our nature, and to which even the wise are liable! If I should judge of that part of life which lies before me by that which I have already seen, the prospect is hideous. Experience tells me, that my past enjoyments have brought no real felicity; and sensation assures me, that those I have felt are stronger than those which are yet to come. Yet experience and sensation in vain persuade; hope, more powerful than either, dresses out the distant prospect in fancied beauty, some happiness in long perspective still beckons me to pursue, and like a losing gamester, every new disappointment increases my ardour to continue the game.

Whence, my friend, this increased love of life,

which grows upon us with our years; whence comes it, that we thus make greater efforts to preserve our existence, at a period when it becomes scarcely worth the keeping? Is it that Nature, attentive to the preservation of mankind, increases our wishes to live, while she lessens our enjoyments; and as she robs the senses of every pleasure, equips imagination in the spoil? Life would be insupportable to an old man who, loaded with infirmities, feared death no more than when in the vigour of manhood; the numberless calamities of decaying nature, and the consciousness of surviving every pleasure would at once induce him with his own hand to terminate the scene of misery; but happily the contempt of death forsakes him at a time when it could be only prejudicial; and life acquires an imaginary value, in proportion as its real value is no more.

Our attachment to every object around us increases, in general, from the length of our acquaintance with it. I would not choose, says a *French* philosopher, to see an old post pulled up, with which I had been long acquainted. A mind long habituated to a certain set of objects, insensibly becomes fond of seeing them; visits them from habit, and parts from them with reluctance: hence proceeds the avarice of the old in every kind of possession. They love the world and all that it produces; they love life and all its advantages; not because it gives them pleasure, but because they have known it long.

Chinvang the Chaste, ascending the throne of China, commanded that all who were unjustly detained in prison, during the preceding reigns, should be set free. Among the number who came to thank their deliverer on this occasion, there appeared a majestic old man, who, falling at the emperor's feet, addressed him as follows: "Great father of China, behold a

" wretch, now eighty-five years old, who was shut up " in a dungeon, at the age of twenty-two. I was im- " prisoned, though a stranger to crime, or without " being even confronted by my accusers. I have now " lived in solitude and in darkness for more than fifty " years, and am grown familiar with distress. As yet " dazzled with the splendour of that sun to which you " have restored me, I have been wandering the streets " to find some friend that would assist, or relieve, or " remember me ; but my friends, my family, and re- " lations are all dead, and I am forgotten. Permit me " then, O Chinvang, to wear out the wretched remains " of life in my former prison ; the walls of my dun- " geon are to me more pleasing than the most splen- " did palace : I have not long to live, and shall be un- " happy except I spend the rest of my days where " my youth was passed ; in that prison from which " you were pleased to release me."

The old man's passion for confinement is similar to that we all have for life. We are habituated to the prison, we look round with discontent, are displeased with the abode, and yet the length of our captivity only increases our fondness for the cell. The trees we have planted, the houses we have built, or the posterity we have begotten, all serve to bind us closer to earth, and embitter our parting. Life sues the young like a new acquaintance ; the companion as yet unexhausted, is at once instructive and amusing ; it is company pleases, yet for all this it is but little regarded To us, who are declined in years, life appears like an old friend ; its jests have been anticipated in former conversation ; it has no new story to make us smile, no new improvement with which to surprise, yet still we love it ; destitute of every enjoyment still we love it : husband the wasting treasure with increased frugality, and feel all the poignancy of anguish in the fatal separation.

Sir Philip Mordaunt was young, beautiful, sincere, brave, an Englishman. He had a complete fortune of his own, and the love of the king his master, which was equivalent to riches. Life opened all her treasure before him, and promised a long succession of future happiness. He came, tasted of the entertainment, but was disgusted even in the beginning. He professed an aversion to living, was tired of walking round the same circle; had tried every enjoyment, and found them all grow weaker at every repetition. "If life be in youth so displeasing," cried he to himself, "what will it "appear when age comes on; if it be at present indif- "ferent, sure it will then be execrable." This thought embittered every reflection; till, at last, with all the serenity of perverted reason, he ended the debate with a pistol! Had this self-deluded man been apprized that existence grows more desirable to us the longer we exist, he would have then faced old age without shrinking, he would have boldly dared to live, and served that society, by his future assiduity, which he basely injured by his desertion. Adieu.

LETTER LXXIII.

From Lien Chi Altangi to Fum Hoam, first President of the Ceremonial Academy at Pekin, in China.

IN reading the newspapers here, I have reckoned up not less than twenty five great men, seventeen very great men, and nine very extraordinary men, in less than the compass of half a year. These, say the gazettes, are the men that posterity are to gaze at with

admiration: these the names that fame will be employed in holding up for the astonishment of succeeding ages. Let me see—forty-six great men in half a year amount just to ninety-two in a year.—I wonder how posterity will be able to remember them all, or whether the people in future times, will have any other business to mind, but that of getting the catalogue by heart.

Does the mayor of a corporation make a speech? he is instantly set down for a great man. Does a pedant digest his common place-book into a folio? he quickly becomes great. Does a poet string up trite sentiments in rhyme? he also becomes the great man of the hour. How diminutive soever the object of admiration, each is followed by a crowd of still more diminutive admirers. The shout begins in his train, onward he marches toward immortality, looks back, at the pursuing crowd with self-satisfaction; catching all the oddities, the whimsies, the absurdities, and the littlenesses of conscious greatness, by the way.

I was yesterday invited by a gentleman to dinner, who promised that our entertainment should consist of an haunch of venison, a turtle, and a great man. I came according to appointment. The venison was fine, the turtle good, but the great man insupportable. The moment I ventured to speak, I was at once contradicted with a snap. I attempted, by a second and a third assault, to retrieve my lost reputation, but was still beat back with confusion. I was resolved to attack him once more from entrenchment, and turned the conversation upon the government of China: but even here he asserted, snapped, and contradicted as before. Heavens, thought I, this man pretends to know China, even better than myself! I looked round to see who was on my side, but every eye was fixed

in admiration on the great man; I therefore at last thought proper to sit silent, and act the pretty gentleman during the ensuing conversation.

When a man has once secured a circle of admirers, he may be as ridiculous here as he thinks proper; and it all passes for elevation of sentiment, or learned absence. If he transgresses the common forms of breeding, mistakes even a tea-pot for a tobacco-box, it is said, that his thoughts are fixed on more important objects: to speak and act like the rest of mankind is to be no greater than they. There is something of oddity in the very idea of greatness: for we are seldom astonished at a thing very much resembling ourselves.

When the Tartars make a Lama, their first care is to place him in a dark corner of the temple; here he is to sit half concealed from view, to regulate the motion of his hands, lips, and eyes; but, above all, he is enjoined gravity and silence. This, however, is but the prelude to his apotheosis; a set of emissaries are dispatched among the people to cry up his piety, gravity, and love of raw flesh; the people take them at their word, approach the Lama, now become an idol, with the most humble prostration; he receives their addresses without motion, commences a god, and is ever after fed by his priests with the spoon of immortality. The same receipt in this country serves to make a great man. The idol only keeps close, sends out his little emissaries to be hearty in his praise; and straight, whether statesman or author, he is set down in the list of fame, continuing to be praised while it is fashionable to praise, or while he prudently keeps his minuteness concealed from the public.

I have visited many countries, and have been in cities without number, yet never did I enter a town which could not produce ten or twelve of those little

great men; all fancying themselves known to the rest of the world, and complimenting each other upon their extensive reputation. It is amusing enough when two of those domestic prodigies of learning mount the stage of ceremony, and give and take praise from each other. I have been present when a German doctor, for having pronounced a panegyric upon a certain monk, was thought the most ingenious man in the world; till the monk soon after divided this reputation by returning the compliment; by which means they both marched off with universal applause.

The same degree of undeserved adulation that attends our great men while living, often also follows him to the tomb. It frequently happens that one of his little admirers sits down big with the important subject, and is delivered of the history of his life and writings. This may properly be called the revolutions of a life between the fireside, and the easy-chair. In this we learn, the year in which he was born, at what an early age he gave symptoms of uncommon genius and application, together with some of his smart sayings, collected by his aunt and mother, while yet but a boy. The next book introduces him to the university, where we are informed of his amazing progress in learning, his excellent skill in darning stockings, and his new invention for papering books to save the covers. He next makes his appearance in the republic of letters, and publishes his folio. Now the colossus is reared, his works are eagerly bought up by all the purchasers of scarce books. The learned societies invite him to become a member; he disputes against some foreigner with a long Latin name, conquers in the controversy, is complimented by several authors of gravity and importance, is excessively fond of egg-sauce with his pig, becomes president of

a literary club, and dies in the meridian of his glory. Happy they, who thus have some little faithful attendant, who never forsakes them, but prepares to wrangle and to praise against every opposer; at once ready to increase their pride while living, and their character when dead. For you and I, my friend, who have no humble admirer thus to attend us; we, who neither are, nor never will be, great men, and who do not much care whether we are great men or no, at least let us strive to be honest men, and to have common sense.

LETTER LXXIV.

FROM THE SAME.

THERE are numbers in this city who live by writing new books; and yet there are thousands of volumes in every large library unread and forgotten. This upon my arrival, was one of those contradictions which I was unable to account for. Is it possible, said I, that there should be any demand for new books, before those already published are read? Can there be so many employed in producing a commodity with which the market is already overstocked; and with goods also better than any of modern manufacture!

What at first view appeared an inconsistence, is a proof at once of this people's wisdom and refinement. Even allowing the works of their ancestors better written than theirs, yet those of the moderns acquire a real value, by being marked with the impression of the times. Antiquity has been in the possession of others; the present is our own: let us first therefore learn to know what belongs to ourselves, and then, if we have leisure, cast our reflections back to the reign

of *Shonou*, who governed twenty thousand years before the creation of the moon.

The volumes of antiquity, like medals, may very well serve to amuse the curious; but the works of the moderns, like the current coin of a kingdom, are much better for immediate use; the former are often prized above their intrinsic value, and kept with care, the latter seldom pass for more than they are worth, and are often subject to the merciless hands of sweating critics, and clipping compilers; the works of antiquity were ever praised, those of the moderns read; the treasures of our ancestors have our esteem, and we boast the passion; those of contemporary genius engage our heart, although we blush to own it. The visits we pay the former resemble those we pay the great; the ceremony is troublesome, and yet such as we would not choose to forego; our acquaintance with modern books is like sitting with a friend; our pride is not flattered in the interview, but it gives more internal satisfaction.

In proportion as society refines, new books must ever become more necessary. Savage rusticity is reclaimed by oral admonition alone; but the elegant excesses of refinement are best corrected by the still voice of a studious inquiry. In a polite age almost every person becomes a reader, and receives more instruction from the press than the pulpit. The preaching Bonse may instruct the illiterate peasant: but nothing less than the insinuating address of a fine writer can win its way to an heart already relaxed in all the effeminacy of refinement. Books are necessary to correct the vices of the polite, but those vices are ever changing, and the antidote should be changed accordingly; should still be new.

Instead therefore of thinking the number of new publications here too great, I could wish it still great-

er, as they are the most useful instruments of reformation. Every country must be instructed either by *writers* or *preachers;* but as the number of readers increases, the number of hearers is proportionably diminished, the writer becomes more useful, and the preaching Bonse less necessary.

Instead therefore of complaining that writers are overpaid, when their works procure them a bare subsistence, I should imagine it the duty of a state, not only to encourage their numbers, but their industry. A Bonse is rewarded with immense riches for instructing only a few, even of the most ignorant of the people; and sure the poor scholar should not beg his bread, who is capable of instructing a million.

Of all rewards, I grant, the most pleasing to a man of real merit, is fame; but a polite age, of all times, is that in which scarcely any share of merit can acquire it. What numbers of fine writers in the latter empire of Rome, when refinement was carried to the highest pitch, have missed that fame and immortality which they had fondly arrogated to themselves? How many Greek authors who wrote at that period when Constantinople was the refined mistress of the empire, now rest either not printed, or not read, in the libraries of Europe! Those who came first, while either state as yet was barbarous, carried all the reputation away. Authors, as the age refined, became more numerous, and their numbers destroyed their fame. It is but natural, therefore, for the writer, when conscious that his works will not procure him fame hereafter, to endeavour to make them turn out to his temporal interest here.

Whatever be the motives which induce men to write, whether avarice or fame, the country becomes most wise and happy, in which they most serve for instructors. The countries, where sacerdotal instruc-

tion alone is permitted, remain in ignorance, superstition, and hopeless slavery. In England, where there are as many new books published as in all the rest of Europe together, a spirit of freedom and reason reigns among the people; they have been often known to act like fools, they are generally found to think like men.

The only danger that attends a multiplicity of publications, is that some of them may be calculated to injure, rather than benefit society. But where writers are numerous, they also serve as a check upon each other; and perhaps a literary inquisition is the most terrible punishment that can be conceived, to a literary transgressor.

But to do the English justice, there are but few offenders of this kind; their publications in general aim at mending either the heart, or improving the common weal. The dullest writer talks of virtue, and liberty, and benevolence with esteem; tells his true story, filled with good and wholesome advice; warns against slavery, bribery, or the bite of a mad dog, and dresses up his little useful magazine of knowledge and entertainment, at least with a good intention. The dunces of France, on the other hand, who have less encouragement, are more vicious. Tender hearts, languishing eyes, Leonora in love at thirteen, extatic transports, stolen blisses are the frivolous subjects of their frivolous memoirs. In England, if a bawdy blockhead thus breaks in on the community, he sets his whole fraternity in a roar; nor can he escape, even though he should fly to nobility for shelter.

Thus even dunces, my friend, may make themselves useful. But there are others whom Nature has blest with talents above the rest of mankind; men capable of thinking with precision, and impressing their thoughts with rapidity. Beings who diffuse those re-

gards upon mankind, which others contract and settle upon themselves. These deserve every honour from that community of which they are more peculiarly the children: to such I would give my heart, since to them I am indebted for its humanity!

Adieu.

LETTER LXXV.

From Hingpo to Lien Chi Altangi, by the way of Moscow.

I STILL remain at *Terki*, where I have received that money which was remitted here in order to release me from captivity. My fair companion still improves in my esteem; the more I know her mind, her beauty becomes more poignant; she appears charming, even among the daughters of *Circassia*.

Yet were I to examine her beauty with the art of a statuary, I should find numbers here that far surpass her; Nature has not granted her all the boasted *Circassian* regularity of feature, and yet she greatly exceeds the fairest of the country, in the art of seizing the affections. Whence, have I often said to myself, this resistless magic that attends even moderate charms? though I regard the beauties of the country with admiration, every interview weakens the impression, but the form of Zelis grows upon my imagination; I never behold her without an increase of tenderness and respect. Whence this injustice of the mind in preferring imperfect beauty to that which Nature seems to have finished with care? whence the infatuation, that he whom a comet could not amaze, should be astonished at a meteor? when reason was

thus fatigued to find an answer, my imagination pursued the subject, and this was the result.

I fancied myself placed between two landscapes, this called the *region of Beauty*, and that *the valley of the Graces;* the one adorned with all that luxuriant Nature could bestow; the fruits of various climates adorned the trees, the grove resounded with music, the gale breathed perfume, every charm that could arise from symmetry and exact distribu ion were here conspicuous, the whole offering a prospect of pleasure without end. *The valley of the Graces* on the other hand seemed by no means so inviting; the streams and the groves appeared just as they usually do in frequented countries: no magnificent parterres, no concert in the grove, the rivulet was edged with weeds, and the rook joined its voice to that of the nightingale. All was simplicity and nature.

The most striking objects ever first allure the traveller. I entered the region of Beauty with increased curiosity, and promised myself endless satisfaction in being introduced to the presiding goddess. I perceived several strangers, who entered with the same design, and what surprised me not a little, was to see several others hastening to leave this abode of seeming felicity.

After some fatigue, I had at last the honour of being introduced to the goddess, who represented Beauty in person. She was seated on a throne, at the foot of which stood several strangers lately introduced like me; all regarding her form in extasy. *Ah what eyes! what lips! how clear her complexion! how perfect her shape!* at these exclamations Beauty with downcast eyes, would endeavour to counterfeit modesty, but soon again looking round as if to confirm every spectator in his favourable sentiments; sometimes she would attempt to allure us by smiles; and at intervals would

bridle back, in order to inspire us with respect as well as tenderness.

This ceremony lasted for some time, and had so much employed our eyes, that we had forgot all this while that the goddess was silent. We soon, however, began to perceive the defect: *what*, said we, among each other, *are we to have nothing but languishing airs, soft looks, and inclinations of the head, will the goddess only deign to satisfy our eyes?* Upon this one of the company stepped up to present her with some fruits he had gathered by the way. She received the present most sweetly smiling, and with one of the whitest hands in the world, but still not a word escaped her lips.

I now found that my companions grew weary of their homage; they went off one by one, and resolving not to be left behind, I offered to go in my turn; when just at the door of the temple I was called back by a female, whose name was *Pride*, and who seemed displeased at the behaviour of the company. *Where are you hastening?* said she to me with an angry air, *the goddess of Beauty is here.* I have been to visit her, Madam, replied I, and find her more beautiful even than report had made her. *And why then will you leave her?* added the female. I have seen her long enough, returned I; I have got all her features by heart. Her eyes are still the same. Her nose is a very fine one, but it is still just such a nose now as it was half an hour ago: could she throw a little more mind into her face, perhaps I should be for wishing to have more of her company. *What signifies*, replied my female, *whether she has a mind or not, has she any occasion for mind, so formed as she is by Nature? If she had a common face, indeed, there might be some reason for thinking to improve it; but when features are already per-*

fect. every alteration would but impair them. A fine face is already at the point of perfection, and a fine lady should endeavour to keep it so; the impression it would receive from thought, would but disturb its whole economy.

To this speech I gave no reply, but made the best of my way to the valley of the Graces. Here I found all those who before had been my companions in the region of beauty, now upon the same errand.

As we entered the valley, the prospect insensibly seemed to improve; we found every thing so natural, so domestic, and pleasing, that our minds, which before were congealed in admiration, now relaxed into gayety and good-humour. We had designed to pay our respects to the presiding goddess, but she was no where to be found. One of our companions asserted that her temple lay to the right; another, to the left; a third, insisted that it was straight before us; and a fourth, that we had left it behind. In short, we found every thing familiar and charming, but could not determine where to seek for the Grace in person.

In this agreeable incertitude we passed several hours, and though very desirous of finding the goddess, by no means impatient of the delay Every part of the valley presented some minute beauty, which without offering itself at once, stole within the soul, and captivated us with the charms of our retreat. Still, however, we continued to search, and might still have continued, had we not been interrupted by a voice which, though we could not see from whence it came, addressed us in this manner:

"If you would find the goddess of Grace, seek her "not under one form, for she assumes a thousand. "Ever changing under the eye of inspection, her va- "riety, rather than her figure, is pleasing. In con- "templating her beauty, the eye glides over every

" perfection with giddy delight, and, capable of fixing " no where, is charmed with the whole *. She is " now Contemplation with solemn look, again Com- " passion with humid eye; she now sparkles with " joy, soon every feature speaks distress: her looks " at times invite our approach, at others repress our " presumption; the goddess cannot be properly " called beautiful under any one of these forms, but " by combining them all, she becomes irresistibly " pleasing." Adieu.

LETTER LXXVI.

From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first President of the Ceremonial Academy at Pekin, in China.

THE shops of London are as well furnished as those of Pekin. Those of London have a picture hung at their door, informing the passengers what they have to sell, as those at Pekin have a board to assure the buyer, that they have no intention to cheat him.

I was this morning to buy silk for a night-cap; immediately upon entering the mercer's shop, the master and his two men with wigs plastered with powder, appeared to ask my commands. They were certainly the civilest people alive; if I but looked, they flew to the place where I cast my eye; every motion of mine sent them running round the whole shop for my satisfaction. I informed them that I wanted what was good, and they showed me not less than forty pieces, and each was better than the former; the prettiest pattern in nature, and the fittest in the world for

* Vultus nimium lubricus aspici. HOR.

night-caps. My very good friend, said I to the mercer, you must not pretend to instruct me in silks; I know these in particular to be no better than your mere flimsy *Bungees*. *That may be*, cried the mercer, who I afterwards found had never contradicted a man in his life, *I cannot pretend to say but they may; but I can assure you, my Lady Trail has had a sacque from this piece this very morning.* But friend, said I, though my Lady has chosen a sacque from it, I see no necessity that I should wear it for a night-cap. *That may be*, returned he again, *yet what becomes a pretty Lady, will at any time look well on a handsome Gentleman.* This short compliment was thrown in so very seasonably upon my ugly face, that even though I disliked the silk, I desired him to cut me off the pattern of a night-cap.

While this business was consigned to his journeyman, the master himself took down some pieces of silk still finer than any I had yet seen, and spreading them before me, *There*, cries he, *there's beauty, my Lord Snakeskin has bespoke the fellow to this for the birth-night this very morning; it would look charmingly in waistcoats.* But I do not want a waistcoat, replied I: *Not want a waistcoat*, returned the mercer, *then I would advise you to buy one; when waistcoats are wanted, you may depend upon it they will come dear. Always buy before you want, and you are sure to be well used, as they say in Cheapside.* There was so much justice in his advice, that I could not refuse taking it; besides, the silk, which was really a good one, increased the temptation; so I gave orders for that too.

As I was waiting to have my bargains measured and cut, which I know not how, they executed but slowly; during the interval, the mercer entertained me with the modern manner of some of the nobility receiving company in their morning gowns; *Perhaps*

Sir, adds he, *you have a mind to see what kind of silk is universally worn.* Without waiting for my reply, he spreads a piece before me which might be reckoned beautiful even in China. *If the nobility*, continues he, *were to know I sold this to any under a Right Honourable, I should certainly lose their custom; you see, my Lord, it is at once rich, tasty, and quite the thing.* I am no Lord, interrupted I.—*I beg pardon*, cried he, *but be pleased to remember, when you intend buying a morning gown, that you had an offer from me of something worth money. Conscience, Sir, conscience is my way of dealing; you may buy a morning gown now, or you may stay till they become dearer and less fashionable, but it is not my business to advise.* In short, most reverend *Fum*, he persuaded me to buy a morning gown also, and would probably have persuaded me to have bought half the goods in his shop, if I had stayed long enough, or was furnished with sufficient money.

Upon returning home, I could not help reflecting with some astonishment, how this very man, with such a confined education and capacity, was yet capable of turning me as he thought proper, and moulding me to his inclinations! I knew he was only answering his own purposes, even while he attempted to appear solicitous about mine: yet by a voluntary infatuation, a sort of passion compounded of vanity and good-nature, I walked into the snare with my eyes open, and put myself to future pain in order to give him immediate pleasure. The wisdom of the ignorant somewhat resembles the instinct of animals; it is diffused in but a very narrow sphere, but within that circle it acts with vigour, uniformity, and success. Adieu.

LETTER LXXVII.

FROM THE SAME.

FROM my former accounts you may be apt to fancy the English the most ridiculous people under the sun. They are indeed ridiculous; yet every other nation in Europe is equally so; each laughs at each, and the Asiatic at all.

I may upon another occasion, point out what is most strikingly absurd in other countries; I shall at present confine myself only to France. The first national peculiarity a traveller meets upon entering that kingdom, is an odd sort of a staring vivacity in every eye, not excepting even the children; the people, it seems, have got it into their heads that they have more wit than others, and so stare in order to look smart.

I know not how it happens, but there appears a sickly delicacy in the faces of their finest women. This may have introduced the use of paint, and paint produces wrinkles: so that a fine lady shall look like a hag at twenty-three. But as in some measure they never appear young, so it may be equally asserted, that they actually think themselves never old; a gentle Miss shall prepare for new conquests at sixty, shall hobble a rigadoon when she can scarcely hobble out without a crutch, she shall affect the girl, play her fan and her eyes, and talk of sentiments, bleeding hearts, and expiring for love when dying with age. Like a departing philosopher she attempts to make her last moments the most brilliant of her life.

Their civility to strangers is what they are chiefly proud of; and to confess sincerely, their beggars are the very politest beggars I ever knew; in other places a traveller is addressed with a piteous whine, or a

sturdy solemnity, but a French beggar shall ask your charity with a very genteel bow, and thank you for it with a smile and shrug.

Another instance of this people's breeding I must not forget. An Englishman could not speak his native language in a company of foreigners where he was sure that none understood him; a travelling Hottentot himself would be silent if acquainted only with the language of his country; but a Frenchman shall talk to you whether you understand his language or not; never troubling his head whether you have learned French, still he keeps up the conversation, fixes his eye full in your face. and asks a thousand questions, which he answers himself for want of a more satisfactory reply.

But their civility to foreigners is not half so great as their admiration of themselves. Every thing that belongs to them and their nation is great, magnificent beyond expression; quite romantic! every garden is a paradise, every hovel a palace, and every woman an angel. They shut their eyes close, throw their mouths wide open, and cry out in rapture: Sacre! What beauty! O Ciel, what taste! mort de ma vie, what grandeur, was ever any people like ourselves? we are the nation of men, and all the rest no better than two-legged barbarians.

I fancy the French would make the best cooks in the world, if they had but meat; as it is, they can dress you out five different dishes from a nettle-top, seven from a dock leaf, and twice as many from a frog's haunches; these eat prettily enough when one is a little used to them, are easy of digestion, and seldom overload the stomach with crudities. They seldom dine under seven hot dishes; it is true, indeed, with all this magnificence, they seldom spread a cloth before the guests; but in that I cannot be angry with

them; since those who have got no linen on their backs, may very well be excused for wanting it upon their tables.

Even Religion itself loses its solemnity among them. Upon their roads, at about every five miles distance, you see an image of the Virgin Mary, dressed up in grim head-clothes, painted cheeks, and an old red petticoat; before her a lamp is often kept burning, at which, with the saint's permission, I have frequently lighted my pipe. Instead of the Virgin you are sometimes presented with a crucifix, at other times with a wooden Saviour, fitted out in complete garniture, with sponge, spear, nails, pincers, hammer, bees-wax and vinegar-bottle. Some of these images, I have been told, came down from heaven; if so, in heaven they have but bungling workmen.

In passing through their towns, you frequently see the men sitting at the doors knitting stockings, while the care of cultivating the ground and pruning the vines falls to the women. This is perhaps the reason why the fair sex are granted some peculiar privileges in this country; particularly when they can get horses, of riding without a side-saddle.

But I begin to think you may find this description pert and dull enough; perhaps it is so, yet in general it is the manner in which the French usually describe foreigners; and it is but just to *force* a part of that ridicule back upon them, which they attempt to lavish on others. Adieu.

LETTER LXXVIII.

FROM THE SAME.

THE two theatres, which serve to amuse the citizens here, are again opened for the winter. The mimetic troops, different from those of the state, begin their campaign when all the others quit the field; and at a time when the Europeans cease to destroy each other in reality, they are entertained with mock battles upon the stage.

The dancing master once more shakes his quivering feet; the carpenter prepares his paradise of pasteboard; the hero resolves to cover his forehead with brass, and the heroine begins to scour up her copper tail, preparative to future operations; in short, all are in motion, from the theatrical letter-carrier in yellow clothes, to Alexander the Great that stands on a stool.

Both houses have already commenced hostilities. War, open war, and no quarter received or given! Two singing women, like heralds, have begun the contest; the whole town is divided on this solemn occasion; one has the finest pipe, the other the finest manner; one curtsies to the ground, the other salutes the audience with a smile; one comes on with modesty which asks, the other with boldness which extorts applause; one wears powder, the other has none; one has the longest waist, but the other appears most easy; all, all is important and serious; the town as yet perseveres in its neutrality, a cause of such moment demands the most mature deliberation, they continue to exhibit, and it is very possible this contest may continue to please to the end of the season.

But the generals of either army, have, as I am told, several reinforcements to lend occasional assistance.

If they produce a pair of diamond buckles at one house, we have a pair of eye-brows that can match them at the other. If we out do them in our attitude, they can overcome us by a shrug; if we can bring more children on the stage, they can bring more guards in red clothes, who strut and shoulder their swords to the astonishment of every spectator.

They tell me here, that people frequent the theatre in order to be instructed as well as amused. I smile to hear the assertion. If I ever go to one of their play-houses, what with trumpets, hallowing behind the stage, and bawling upon it, I am quite dizzy before the performance is over. If I enter the house with any sentiments in my head, I am sure to have none going away, the whole mind being filled with a dead march, a funeral procession, a cat-call, a jig, or a tempest.

There is perhaps nothing more easy than to write properly for the English theatre; I am amazed that none are apprenticed to the trade. The author, when well acquainted with the value of thunder and lightning, when versed in all the mystery of scene-shifting and trap-doors; when skilled in the proper periods to introduce a wire-walker, or a water-fall; when instructed in every actor's peculiar talent, and capable of adapting his speeches to the supposed excellence; when thus instructed, he knows all that can give a modern audience pleasure. One player shines in an exclamation, another in a groan, a third in a horror, a fourth in a start, a fifth in a smile, a sixth faints, and a seventh fidgets round the stage with peculiar vivacity; that piece therefore will succeed best where each has a proper opportunity of shining; the actor's business is not so much to adapt himself to the poet, as the poet's to adapt himself to the actor.

The great secret, therefore, of tragedy-writing at present, is a perfect acquaintance with theatrical *ah's* and *oh's*, a certain number of these interspersed with *gods ! tortures*, *racks*, and *damnation*, shall distort every actor almost into convulsions, and draw tears from every spectator; a proper use of these will infallibly fill the whole house with applause. But above all, a whining scene must strike most forcibly. I would advise, from my present knowledge of the audience, the two favourite players of the town to introduce a scene of this sort in every play. Towards the middle of the last act, I would have them enter with wild looks and out-spread arms; there is no necessity for speaking; they are only to groan at each other; they must vary the tones of exclamation and despair through the whole theatrical gamut, wring their figures into every shape of distress, and when their calamities have drawn a proper quantity of tears from the sympathetic spectators, they may go off in dumb solemnity at different doors, clasping their hands, or slapping their pocket holes: this, which may be called a tragic pantomime, will answer every purpose of moving the passions, as well as words could have done, and it must save those expenses which go to reward an author.

All modern plays that would keep the audience alive, must be conceived in this manner, and indeed, many a modern play is made up on no other plan. This is the merit that lifts up the heart, like opium, into a rapture of insensibility, and can dismiss the mind from all the fatigue of thinking: this is the eloquence that shines in many a long-forgotten scene, which has been reckoned excessively fine upon acting; this the lightning that flashes no less in the Hyperbolical tyrant *who breakfasts on the wind*, than in little Norval, *as harmless as the babe unborn*. Adieu.

LETTER LXXIX.

FROM THE SAME.

I HAVE always regarded the spirit of mercy which appears in the Chinese laws with admiration. An order for the execution of a criminal is carried from court by slow journeys of six miles a day; but a pardon is sent down with the most rapid dispatch. If five sons of the same father be guilty of the same offence, one of them is forgiven, in order to continue the family and comfort his aged parents in their decline.

Similar to this, there is a spirit of mercy breathes through the laws of England, which some erroneously endeavour to suppress; the laws however seem unwilling to punish the offender, or to furnish the officers of justice with every means of acting with severity. Those who arrest debtors are denied the use of arms, the nightly watch is permitted to repress the disorders of the drunken citizens only with clubs; justice in such a case seems to hide her terrors, and permits some offenders to escape rather than load any with a punishment disproportioned to the crime.

Thus it is to the glory of an Englishman, that he is not only governed by laws, but that these are also tempered by mercy; a country restrained by severe laws, and those too executed with severity (as in Japan) is under the most terrible species of tyranny; a royal tyrant is generally dreadful to the great, but numerous penal laws grind every rank of people, and chiefly those least able to resist oppression, the poor.

It is very possible, thus for a people to become slaves to laws of their own enacting, as the Athenians

were to those of Draco. "It might first happen," says the historian, "that men with peculiar talents "for villainy, attempted to evade the ordinances alrea- "dy established; their practices, therefore, soon "brought on a new law levelled against them; but "the same degree of cunning which had taught the "knave to evade the former statutes, taught him to "evade the latter also; he flew to new shifts, while "justice pursued with new ordinances; still, howe- "ver, he kept his proper distance, and whenever one "crime was judged penal by the state, he left com- "mitting it in order to practise some unforbidden "species of villainy. Thus the criminal against "whom the threatenings were denounced always es- "caped free; while the simple rogue alone felt the "rigour of justice. In the mean time penal laws be- "came numerous, almost every person in the state "unknowingly at different times offended, and was "every moment subject to a malicious prosecution." In fact, penal laws, instead of preventing crimes, are generally enacted after the commission; instead of repressing the growth of ingenious villainy, only multiply deceit, by putting it upon new shifts and expedients of practising with impunity.

Such laws, therefore, resemble the guards which are sometimes imposed upon tributary princes, apparently indeed to secure them from danger, but in reality to confirm their captivity.

Penal laws, it must be allowed, secure property in a state, but they also diminish personal security in the same proportion; there is no positive law, how equitable soever, that may not be sometimes capable of injustice. When a law enacted to make theft punishable with death, happens to be equitably executed, it can at best only guard our possessions; but when by favour or ignorance, justice pronounces a wrong ver-

dict, it then attacks our lives, since in such a case the whole community suffers with the innocent victim; if therefore in order to secure the effects of one man, I should make a law which may take away the life of another, in such a case to attain a smaller good, I am guilty of a greater evil; to secure society in the possession of a bauble, I render a real and valuable possession precarious. And indeed the experience of every age may serve to vindicate the assertion: no law could be more just than that called *lesæ Majestatis*, when Rome was governed by Emperors. It was but reasonable, that every conspiracy against the administration should be detected and punished; yet what terrible slaughters succeeded in consequence of its enactment? proscriptions, stranglings, poisonings, in almost every family of distinction; yet all done in a legal way, every criminal had his trial, and lost his life by a majority of witnesses.

And such will ever be the case, where punishments are numerous, and where a weak, vicious, but above all, where a mercenary magistrate is concerned in their execution; such a man desires to see penal laws increased, since he too frequently has it in his power, to turn them into instruments of extortion: in such hands the more laws, the wider means, not of satisfying justice, but of satiating avarice.

A mercenary magistrate who is rewarded in proportion, not to his integrity, but to the number he convicts, must be a person of the most unblemished character, or he will lean on the side of cruelty; and when once the work of injustice is begun, it is impossible to tell how far it will proceed: it is said of the Hyæna that naturally it is no way ravenous, but when once it has tasted human flesh, it becomes the most voracious animal of the forest, and continues to persecute mankind ever after: a corrupt magistrate may

be considered as a human Hyæna; he begins perhaps by a private snap, he goes on to a morsel among friends, he proceeds to a meal in public, from a meal he advances to a surfeit, and at last sucks blood like a vampyre.

Not into such hands should the administration of justice be intrusted, but to those who know how to reward as well as to punish. It was a fine saying of Nangfu the emperor, who being told that his enemies had raised an insurrection in one of the distant provinces; come then, my friends, said he, follow me, and I promise you that we shall quickly destroy them; he marched forward, and the rebels submitted upon his approach. All now thought that he would take the most signal revenge, but were supprised to see the captives treated with mildness and humanity. How! cries his first minister, is this the manner in which you fulfil your promise? your royal word was given that your enemies should be destroyed, and behold you have pardoned all, and even caressed some! I promised, replied the emperor, with a generous air, to *destroy* my enemies; I have fulfilled my word, for see they are enemies no longer; I have made *friends* of them.

This, could it always succeed, were the true method of destroying the enemies of a state; well it were if rewards and mercy alone could regulate the commonwealth; but since punishments are sometimes necessary, let them at least be rendered terrible, by being executed but seldom, and let justice lift her sword rather to terrify than revenge.

Adieu.

LETTER LXXX.

FROM THE SAME.

I HAVE as yet given you but a short and imperfect description of the Ladies of England. Woman, my friend, is a subject not easily understood, even in China; what therefore can be expected from my knowledge of the sex in a country where they are universally allowed to be riddles, and I but a stranger?

To confess a truth, I was afraid to begin the description, lest the sex should undergo some new revolution before it was finished: and my picture should thus become old before it could well be said to have ever been new. To day they are lifted upon stilts, tomorrow they lower their heels and raise their heads; their clothes at one time are bloated out with whalebone; at present they have laid their hoops aside, and are become as slim as mermaids. All, all is in a state of continual fluctuation, from the Mandarine's wife, who rattles through the streets in her chariot, to the humble sempstress, who clatters over the pavement in iron-shod pattens.

What chiefly distinguishes the sex at present is the train. As a Lady's quality or fashion was once determined here by the circumference of her hoop, both are now measured by the length of her tail. Women of moderate fortunes are contented with tails moderately long; but ladies of true taste and distinction set no bounds to their ambition in this particular. I am told the Lady Mayoress, on days of ceremony, carries one longer than a bell-wether of Bantam,

whose tail you know is trundled along in a wheel-barrow.

Sun of China, what contradictions do we find in this strange world! not only the people of different countries think in opposition to each other, but the inhabitants of a single island are often found inconsistent to themselves; would you believe it? this very people, my Fum, who are so fond of seeing their women with long tails, at the same time dock their horses to the very rump!!

But you may easily guess that I am no way displeased with a fashion which tends to increase a demand for the commodities of the East, and is so very beneficial to the country in which I was born. Nothing can be better calculated to increase the price of silk than the present manner of dressing. A lady's train is not bought but at some expense, and after it has swept the public walks for a very few evenings, it is fit to be worn no longer: more silk must be bought in order to repair the breach, and some ladies of peculiar economy are thus found to patch up their tails eight or ten times in a season. This unnecessary consumption may introduce poverty here, but then we shall be the richer for it in China.

The man in black, who is a professed enemy to this manner of ornamenting the tail, assures me, there are numberless inconveniences attending it, and that a lady dressed up to the fashion is as much a cripple as any in Nankin. But his chief indignation is levelled at those who dress in this manner, without a proper fortune to support it. He assures me, that he has known some, who would have a tail, though they wanted a petticoat, and others, who, without any other pretensions, fancied they became ladies merely from the addition of three superfluous yards of ragged silk; I know a thrifty good woman, continues he, who, think-

ing herself obliged to carry a train like her betters, never walks from home without the uneasy apprehensions of wearing it out too soon; every excursion she makes gives her new anxiety, and her train is every bit as importunate, and wounds her peace as much as the bladder we sometimes see tied to the tail of a cat.

Nay, he ventures to affirm, that a train may often bring a lady into the most critical circumstances; for should a rude fellow, says he, offer to come up to ravish a kiss, and the lady attempt to avoid it, in retiring she must necessarily tread upon her train, and thus fall fairly upon her back, by which means every one knows—her clothes may be spoiled.

The ladies here make no scruple to laugh at the smallness of a Chinese slipper, but I fancy our wives at China would have a more real cause of laughter, could they but see the immoderate length of an European train. Head of Confucius! to view a human being crippling herself with a great unwieldy tail for our diversion; backward she cannot go, forward she must move but slowly, and if ever she attempts to turn round, it must be in a circle not smaller than that described by the wheeling crocodile, when it would face an assailant. And yet to think that all this confers importance and majesty! to think that a lady acquires additional respect from fifteen yards of trailing taffety! I cannot contain; ha, ha, ha; this is certainly a remnant of European barbarity; the female Tartar dressed in sheep skins, is in far more convenient drapery. Their own writers have sometimes inveighed against the absurdity of this fashion, but perhaps it has never been ridiculed so well as upon the Italian theatre, where Pasquarielo being engaged to attend on the countess of Fernambroco, having one of his hands employed in carrying her muff, and the

other her lap-dog, he bears her train majestically along by sticking it in the waistband of his breeches.

Adieu.

LETTER LXXXI.

FROM THE SAME.

A DISPUTE has for some time divided the philosophers of Europe; it is debated, whether arts and sciences are more serviceable or prejudicial to mankind. They who maintain the cause of literature, endeavour to prove their usefulness from the impossibility of a large number of men subsisting in a small tract of country without them; from the pleasure which attends the acquisition, and from the influence of knowledge in promoting practical morality.

They who maintain the opposite opinion, display the happiness and innocence of those uncultivated nations who live without learning; urge the numerous vices which are to be found only in polished society, enlarge upon the oppression, the cruelty, and the blood which must necessarily be shed, in order to cement civil society, and insist upon the happy equality of conditions in a barbarous state preferable to the unnatural subordination of a more refined constitution.

This dispute, which has already given so much employment to speculative indolence, has been managed with much ardour, and (not to suppress our sentiments) with but little sagacity. They who insist that the sciences are useful in *refined* society are certainly right, and they who maintain that *barbarous*

nations are more happy without them, are right also; but when one side for this reason attempts to prove them as universally useful to the solitary barbarian as to the native of a crowded commonwealth; or when the other endeavours to banish them as prejudicial to all society, even from populous states, as well as from the inhabitants of the wilderness, they are both wrong; since that knowledge which makes the happiness of a refined European, would be a torment to the precarious tenant of an Asiatic wild.

Let me, to prove this, transport the imagination for a moment to the midst of a forest in Siberia. There we behold the inhabitant, poor indeed, but equally fond of happiness with the most refined philosopher of China. The earth lies uncultivated and uninhabited for miles around him; his little family and he the sole and undisputed possessors. In such circumstances Nature and Reason will induce him to prefer a hunter's life to that of cultivating the earth. He will certainly adhere to that manner of living which is carried on at the smallest expense of labour, and that food which is most agreeable to the appetite; he will prefer indolent though precarious luxury to a laborious though permanent competence; and a knowledge of his own happiness will determine him to persevere in native barbarity.

In like manner his happiness will incline him to bind himself by no law: laws are made in order to secure present property, but he is possessed of no property which he is afraid to lose, and desires no more than will be sufficient to sustain him; to enter into compacts with others, would be undergoing a voluntary obligation without the expectance of any reward. He and his countrymen are tenants, not rivals, in the same inexhaustible forest; the increased possessions of one by no means diminishes the expec-

tations arising from equal assiduity in another; there are no need of laws therefore to repress ambition, where there can be no mischief attending its most boundless gratifications.

Our solitary Siberian will, in like manner, find the sciences not only entirely useless in directing his practice, but disgusting even in speculation. In every contemplation our curiosity must be first excited by the *appearances* of things, before our reason undergoes the fatigue of investigating the *causes*. Some of those appearances are produced by experiment, others by minute inquiry; some arise from a knowledge of foreign climates, and others from an intimate study of our own. But there are few objects in comparison which present themselves to the inhabitant of a barbarous country; the game he hunts, or the transient cottage he builds, make up the chief objects of his concern; his curiosity therefore must be proportionably less; and if that is diminished, the reasoning faculty will be diminished in proportion.

Besides, sensual enjoyment adds wings to curiosity. We consider few objects with ardent attention, but those which have some connexion with our wishes, our pleasures, or our necessities. A desire of enjoyment first interests our passions in the pursuit, points out the object of investigation, and Reason then comments where Sense has led the way. An increase in the number of our enjoyments therefore necessarily produces an increase of scientific research; but in countries where almost every enjoyment is wanting, Reason there seems destitute of its great inspirer, and speculation is the business of fools when it becomes its own reward.

The barbarous Siberian is too wise, therefore, to exhaust his time in quest of knowledge, which neither curiosity prompts, nor pleasure impels him to

pursue. When told of the exact admeasurement of a degree upon the equator at Quito, he feels no pleasure in the account; when informed that such a discovery tends to promote navigation and commerce, he finds himself no way interested in either. A discovery which some have pursued at the hazard of their lives, affects him with neither astonishment nor pleasure. He is satisfied with thoroughly understanding the few objects which contribute to his own felicity, he knows the properest places where to lay the snare for the sable, and discerns the value of furs with more than European sagacity. More extended knowledge would only serve to render him unhappy, it might lend a ray to show him the misery of his situation, but could not guide him in his efforts to avoid it. Ignorance is the happiness of the poor.

The misery of a being endowed with sentiments above its capacity of fruition, is most admirably described in one of the fables of Locman the Indian moralist. "An elephant that had been peculiarly "serviceable in fighting the battles of Wistnow, was "ordered by the god to wish for whatever he thought "proper, and the desire should be attended with im- "mediate gratification. The elephant thanked his "benefactor on bended knees, and desired to be en- "dowed with the reason and the faculties of a man. "Wistnow was sorry to hear the foolish request, and "endeavoured to dissuade him from his misplaced "ambition; but finding it to no purpose, gave him at "last such a portion of wisdom as could correct even "the Zendavesta of Zoroaster. The reasoning ele- "phant went away rejoicing in his new acquisition, "and though his body still retained its ancient form, "he found his appetites and passions entirely alter- "ed. He first considered that it would not only be "more comfortable, but also more becoming to wear

" clothes ; but unhappily he had no method of mak-
" ing them himself, nor had he the use of speech to
" demand them from others, and this was the first
" time he felt real anxiety. He soon perceived how
" much more elegantly men were fed than he ; there-
" fore, he began to loath his usual food and longed
" for those delicacies which adorn the tables of prin-
" ces ; but here again he found it impossible to be
" satisfied ; for though he could easily obtain flesh,
" yet he found it impossible to dress it in any degree
" of perfection. In short, every pleasure that contri-
" buted to the felicity of mankind, served only to ren-
" der him more miserable, as he found himself utter-
" ly deprived of the power of enjoyment. In this
" manner he led a repining, discontented life, detest-
" ing himself, and displeased with his ill-judged am-
" bition, till at last his benefactor Wistnow, taking
" compassion on his forlorn situation, restored him to
" the ignorance and the happiness which he was ori-
" ginally formed to enjoy."

No, my friend ; to attempt to introduce the sciences into a nation of wandering barbarians, is only to render them more miserable than even Nature designed they should be. A life of simplicity is best fitted to a state of solitude.

The great law-giver of Russia attempted to improve the desolate inhabitants of Siberia, by sending among them some of the politest men of Europe. The consequence has shown, that the country was as yet unfit to receive them ; they languished for a time with a sort of exotic malady, every day degenerated from themselves, and at last, instead of rendering the country more polite, they conformed to the soil, and put on barbarity.

No, my friend ; in order to make the sciences useful in any country, it must first become populous ; the in-

habitant must go through the different stages of hunter, shepherd, and husbandman: then when property becomes valuable, and consequently gives cause for injustice; then when laws are appointed to repress injury, and secure possession; when men, by the sanction of those laws, become possessed of superfluity; when luxury is thus introduced and demands its continual supply, then it is that the sciences become necessary and useful; the state then cannot subsist without them; they must then be introduced, at once to teach men to draw the greatest possible quantity of pleasure from circumscribed possession; and to restrain them within the bounds of moderate enjoyment.

The sciences are not the cause of luxury, but its consequence, and this destroyer thus brings with it an antidote which resists the virulence of its own poison. By asserting that luxury introduces the sciences, we assert a truth; but if with those, who reject the utility of learning, we assert that the sciences also introduce luxury, we shall be at once false, absurd, and ridiculous. Adieu.

LETTER LXXXII.

From Lien Chi Altangi, to Hingpo, by the way of Moscow.

YOU are now arrived at an age, my son, when pleasure dissuades from application; but rob not, by present gratification, all the succeeding period of life of its happiness. Sacrifice a little pleasure at first to the expectance of greater. The study of a few years will make the rest of life completely easy.

But instead of continuing the subject myself, take the following instructions borrowed from a modern philosopher of China *. " He who has begun his for-
" tune by study will certainly confirm it by perseve-
" rance. The love of books damps the passion for
" pleasure, and when this passion is once extinguish-
" ed, life is then cheaply supported; thus a man be-
" ing possessed of more than he wants, can never be
" subject to great disappointments, and avoids all
" those meannesses which indigence sometimes una-
" voidably produces.

" There is unspeakable pleasure attending the life
" of a voluntary student. The first time I read an
" excellent book, it is to me just as if I had gained a
" new friend. When I read over a book I have pe-
" rused before, it resembles the meeting with an old
" one. We ought to lay hold of every incident in
" life for improvement, the trifling as well as the im-
" portant. It is not one diamond alone which gives
" lustre to another, a common coarse stone is also em-
" ployed for that purpose. Thus I ought to draw ad-
" vantage from the insults and contempt I meet with
" from a worthless fellow. His brutality ought to in-
" duce me to self-examination, and correct every ble-
" mish that may have given rise to his calumny.

" Yet with all the pleasures and profits which are
" generally produced by learning, parents often find
" it difficult to induce their children to study. They
" often seem dragged to what wears the appearance
" of application. Thus being dilatory in the begin-
" ning, all future hopes of eminence are entirely cut

* A translation of this passage may also be seen in Du Halde, Vol II. Fol. p. 47, and 58 This extract will at least serve to show that fondness for humour which appears in the writings of the Chinese.

" off. If they find themselves obliged to write two " lines more polite than ordinary, their pencil then " seems as heavy as a mill-stone, and they spend ten " years in turning two or three periods with propri- " ety.

" These persons are most at a loss when a banquet " is almost over; the plate and the dice go round, " that the number of little verses which each is obliged " to repeat may be determined by chance. The boo- " by, when it comes to his turn, appears quite stupid " and insensible. The company divert themselves " with his confusion; and sneers, winks, and whispers " are circulated at his expense. As for him, he " opens a pair of large heavy eyes, stares at all about " him, and even offers to join in the laugh, without " ever considering himself as the burthen of all their " good humour.

" But it is of no importance to read much, except " you be regular in reading. If it be interrupted for " any considerable time, it can never be attained with " proper improvement. There are some who study " for one day with intense application, and repose " themselves for ten days after. But wisdom is a " coquet, and must be courted with unabating assidu- " ity.

" It was a saying of the ancients, that a man never " opens a book without reaping some advantage by it. " I say with them, that every book can serve to make " us more expert, except romances, and these are no " better than the instruments of debauchery. They " are dangerous fictions, where love is the ruling pas- " sion.

" The most indecent strokes there pass for turns " of wit, intrigue and criminal liberties for gallantry " and politeness. Assignations, and even villainy, are " put in such strong lights, as may inspire even grown

" men with the strongest passion ; how much more " therefore ought the youth of either sex to dread " them, whose reason is so weak, and whose hearts " are so susceptible of passion !

" To slip in by a back-door, or leap a wall, are ac- " complishments that when handsomely set off en- " chant a young heart. It is true the plot is com- " monly wound up by a marriage, concluded with " the consent of parents, and adjusted by every cere- " mony prescribed by law. But as in the body of the " work there are many passages that offend good " morals, overthrow laudable custom, violate the laws, " and destroy the duties most essential to society, " virtue is thereby exposed to the most dangerous at- " tacks.

" But, say some, the authors of these romances " have nothing in view, but to represent vice punish- " ed, and virtue rewarded. Granted : but will the " greater number of readers take notice of these pu- " nishments and rewards ? Are not their minds carri- " ed to something else ? Can it be imagined that the " heart with which the author inspires the love of vir- " tue, can overcome that crowd of thoughts which " sway them to licentiousness ? To be able to incul- " cate virtue by so leaky a vehicle, the author must " be a philosopher of the first rank. But in our age " we can find but few first-rate philosophers.

" Avoid such performances where vice assumes " the face of virtue ; seek wisdom and knowledge " without ever thinking you have found them. A man " is wise, while he continues in the pursuit of wisdom ; " but when he once fancies that he has found the ob- " ject of his inquiry, he then becomes a fool. Learn " to pursue virtue from the man that is blind, who " never makes a step without first examining the " ground with his staff.

" The world is like a vast sea; mankind like a " vessel sailing on its tempestuous bosom. Our pru- " dence is its sails, the sciences serve us for oars, " good or bad fortune are the favourable or contrary " winds, and judgment is the rudder; without this " last the vessel is tossed by every billow, and will " find shipwreck in every breeze. In a word, ob- " scurity and indigence are the parents of vigilance " and economy; vigilance and economy of riches " and honour; riches and honour of pride and luxu- " ry; pride and luxury of impurity and idleness; " and impurity and idleness again produce indigence " and obscurity. Such are the revolutions of life."

Adieu.

LETTER LXXXIII.

From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first President of the Ceremonial Academy at Pekin, in China.

I FANCY the character of a poet is in every country the same, fond of enjoying the present, careless of the future, his conversation that of a man of sense, his actions those of a fool! of fortitude able to stand unmoved at the bursting of an earthquake, yet of sensibility to be affected by the breaking of a tea-cup; such is his character, which considered in every light is the very opposite of that which leads to riches.

The poets of the West are as remarkable for their indigence as their genius, and yet among the numerous hospitals designed to relieve the poor, I have heard of but one erected for the benefit of decayed authors. This was founded by pope Urban VIII. and called the retreat of the incurables, intimating,

that it was equally impossible to reclaim the patients, who sued for reception, from poverty, or from poetry. To be sincere, were I to send you an account of the lives of the Western poets, either ancient or modern, I fancy you would think me employed in collecting materials for an history of human wretchedness.

Homer is the first poet and beggar of note among the ancients; he was blind, and sung his ballads about the streets; but it is observed, that his mouth was more frequently filled with verses than with bread. Plautus the comic poet was better off; he had two trades, he was a poet for his diversion, and helped to turn a mill in order to gain a livelihood. Terence was a slave, and Boethius died in gaol.

Among the Italians, Paulo Burghese, almost as good a poet as Tasso, knew fourteen different trades, and yet died because he could get employment in none. Tasso himself, who had the most amiable character of all poets, has often been obliged to borrow a crown from some friend, in order to pay for a month's subsistence; he has left us a pretty sonnet, addressed to his cat, in which he begs the light of her eyes to write by, being too poor to afford himself a candle. But Bentivoglio, poor Bentivoglio! chiefly demands our pity. His comedies will last with the Italian language; he dissipated a noble fortune in acts of charity and benevolence; but falling into misery in his old age, was refused to be admitted into an hospital which he himself had erected.

In Spain it is said, the great Cervantes died of hunger; and it is certain, that the famous Camoens ended his days in an hospital.

If we turn to France, we shall there find even stronger instances of the ingratitude of the public. Vaugelas, one of the politest writers, and one of the honestest men of his time, was surnamed the Owl,

from his being obliged to keep within all day, and venture out only by night, through fear of his creditors. His last will is very remarkable; after having bequeathed all his worldly substance to the discharging his debts, he goes on thus: but as there still may remain some creditors unpaid, even after all that I have shall have been disposed of, in such a case, it is my last will, that my body should be sold to the surgeons to the best advantage, and that the purchase should go to the discharging those debts which I owe to society; so that if I could not, while living, at least when dead, I may be useful.

Cassander was one of the greatest geniuses of his time, yet all his merit could not procure him a bare subsistence. Being by degrees driven into an hatred of all mankind from the little pity he found amongst them, he even ventured at last ungratefully to impute his calamities to Providence. In his last agonies when the priest intreated him to rely on the justice of heaven, and ask mercy from him that made him; *If God*, replies he, *has shown me no justice here, what reason have I to expect any from him hereafter?* But being answered, that a suspension of justice was no argument that should induce us to doubt of its reality; let me intreat you, continued his confessor, by all that is dear, to be reconciled to God, your father, your maker, and friend. *No*, replied the exasperated wretch, *you know the manner in which he left me to live;* (and pointing to the straw on which he was stretched,) *and you see the manner in which he leaves me to die!*

But the sufferings of the poet in other countries is nothing when compared to his distresses here; the names of Spencer and Otway, Butler and Dryden, are every day mentioned as a national reproach, some of them lived in a state of precarious indigence, and others literally died of hunger.

At present the few poets of England no longer depend on the great for subsistence, they have now no other patrons but the public, and the public, collectively considered, is a good, and a generous master. It is, indeed, too frequently mistaken as to the merits of every candidate for favour; but to make amends, it is never mistaken long. A performance indeed may be forced for a time into reputation, but destitute of real merit it soon sinks; time, the touchstone of what is truly valuable, will soon discover the fraud, and an author should never arrogate to himself any share of success, till his works have been read at least ten years with satisfaction.

A man of letters at present, whose works are valuable, is perfectly sensible of their value. Every polite member of the community by buying what he writes, contributes to reward him. The ridicule therefore of living in a garret, might have been wit in the last age, but continues such no longer, because no longer true. A writer of real merit now may easily be rich if his heart be set only on fortune: and for those who have no merit, it is but fit that such should remain in merited obscurity. He may now refuse an invitation to dinner, without fearing to incur his patron's displeasure, or to starve by remaining at home. He may now venture to appear in company with just such clothes as other men generally wear, and talk even to princes with all the conscious superiority of wisdom. Though he cannot boast of fortune here, yet he can bravely assert the dignity of independence. Adieu.

LETTER LXXXIV.

FROM THE SAME.

I HAVE interested myself so long in all the concerns of this people, that I am almost become an Englishman; I now begin to read with pleasure of their taking towns, or gaining battles, and secretly wish disappointment to all the enemies of Britain. Yet still my regard to mankind fills me with concern for their contentions. I could wish to see the disturbances of Europe once more amicably adjusted; I am an enemy to nothing in this good world but war; I hate fighting between rival states; I hate it between man and man; I hate fighting even between women.

I already informed you, that while Europe was at variance, we were also threatened from the stage with an irreconcileable opposition, and that our singing women were resolved to sing at each other to the end of the season. O my friend, those fears were just. They are not only determined to sing at each other to the end of the season, but what is worse, to sing the same song, and what is still more insupportable, to make us pay for hearing.

If they be for war, for my part I should advise them to have a public congress, and there fairly squall at each other. What signifies sounding the trumpet of defiance at a distance, and calling in the town to fight their battles. I would have them come boldly into one of the most open and frequented streets, face to face, and there try their skill in quavering.

However this may be, resolved I am that they shall not touch one single piece of silver more of mine. Though I have ears for music, thanks to Heaven, they are not altogether asses' ears. What! Polly and the

Pick-pocket to night, Polly and the Pick-pocket to-morrow night, and Polly and the Pick-pocket again! I want patience. I will hear no more. My soul is out of tune, all jarring discord, and confusion. Rest, rest ye dear three clinking shillings in my pocket's bottom; the music you make is more harmonious to my spirit, than cat-gut, rosin, or all the nightingales that ever chirruped in petticoats.

But what raises my indignation to the greatest degree is, that this piping does not only pester me on the stage, but is my punishment in private conversation. What is it to me, whether the *fine pipe* of one, or the *great manner* of the other, be preferable? what care I if one has a better top, or the other a nobler bottom? how am I concerned if one sings from the stomach, or the other sings with a snap? Yet paltry as these matters are, they make a subject of debate wherever I go, and this musical dispute, especially among the fair sex, almost always ends in a very unmusical altercation.

Sure the spirit of contention is mixed into the very constitution of the people; divisions among the inhabitants of other countries arise only from their higher concerns, but subjects the most contemptible are made an affair of party here, the spirit is carried even into their amusements. The very ladies, whose duty should seem to allay the impetuosity of the opposite sex, become themselves party champions, engage in the thickest of the fight, scold at each other, and show their courage, even at the expense of their lovers and their beauty.

There are even a numerous set of poets who help to keep up the contention, and write for the stage. Mistake me not, I do not mean pieces to be acted upon it, but panegyrical verses on the performers, for that is the most universal method of writing for the

stage at present. It is the business of the stage poet therefore to watch the appearance of every new player at his own house, and so come out next day with a flaunting copy of newspaper verses. In these Nature and the actor may be set to run races, the player always coming off victorious; or Nature may mistake him for herself; or old Shakspeare may put on his winding-sheet and pay him a visit; or the tuneful Nine may strike up their harps in his praise; or should it happen to be an actress, Venus, the beauteous queen of Love, and the naked Graces are ever in waiting: the lady must be herself a goddess bred and born; she must—but you shall have a specimen of one of these poems, which may convey a more precise idea.

*On seeing Mrs. * * perform in the character of * * *.*

To you, bright fair, the Nine address their lays,
And tune my feeble voice to sing thy praise.
The heart-felt power of every charm divine,
Who can withstand their all-commanding shine!
See how she moves along with every grace,
While soul-brought tears steal down each shining face,
She speaks, 'tis rapture all and nameless bliss,
Ye gods, what transport e'er compar'd to this.
As when in Paphian groves the queen of Love,
With fond complaint address'd the listening Jove;
'Twas joy, and endless blisses all around,
And rocks forgot their hardness at the sound.
Then first, at last e'en Jove was taken in,
And felt her charms, without disguise, within.

And yet think not, my friend, that I have any particular animosity against the champions who are at the head of the present commotion; on the contrary, I could find pleasure in their music, if served up at proper intervals; if I heard it only on proper occa-

sions, and not about it wherever I go. In fact, I could patronize them both: and as an instance of my condescension in this particular, they may come and give me a song at my lodging, on any evening when I am at leisure, provided they keep a becoming distance, and stand, while they continue to entertain me, with decent humility at the door.

You perceive I have not read the seventeen books of Chinese ceremonies to no purpose. I know the proper share of respect due to every rank in society. Stage-players, fire-eaters, singing women, dancing-dogs, wild beasts, and wire-walkers, as their efforts are exerted for our amusement, ought not *entirely* to be despised. The laws of every country should allow them to play their tricks at least with impunity. They should not be branded with the ignominious appellation of vagabonds; at least they deserve a rank in society equal to the mystery of barbers, or undertakers, and could my influence extend so far, they should be allowed to earn even forty or fifty pounds a year, if eminent in their profession.

I am sensible however that you will censure me for profusion in this respect, bred up as you are in the narrow prejudices of Eastern frugality. You will undoubtedly assert, that such a stipend is too great for so useless an employment. Yet how will your surprise increase, when told, that though the law holds them as vagabonds, many of them earn more than a thousand a year. You are amazed: there is cause for amazement. A vagabond with a thousand a year is indeed a curiosity in nature; a wonder far surpassing the flying fish, petrified crab, or travelling lobster. However, from my great love to the profession, I would willingly have them divested of part of their contempt, and part of their finery; the law should kindly take them under the wing of protection, fix

them into a corporation, like that of the barbers, and abridge their ignominy and their pensions. As to their abilities in other respects, I would leave that entirely to the public, who are certainly in this case the properest judges, whether they despise them or no.

Yes, my Fum, I would abridge their pensions. A theatrical warrior, who conducts the battles of the stage, should be cooped up with the same caution as a Bantum cock that is kept for fighting. When one of those animals is taken from its native dunghill, we retrench it both in the quantity of its food, and the number of its seraglio: players should in the same manner be fed, not fattened; they should be permitted to get their bread, but not to eat the people's bread into the bargain; and instead of being permitted to keep four mistresses, in conscience they should be contented only with two.

Were stage-players thus brought into bounds, perhaps we should find their admirers less sanguine, and consequently less ridiculous in patronizing them. We should no longer be struck with the absurdity of seeing the same people, whose valour makes such a figure abroad, apostrophizing in the praise of a bouncing blockhead, and wrangling in the defence of a copper-tailed actress at home.

I shall conclude my letter with the sensible admonition of Mê the philosopher. "You love harmony," says he, "and are charmed with music. I do not "blame you for hearing a fine voice, when you are in "your closet with a lovely parterre under your eye, "or in the night-time, while perhaps the moon diffu- "ses her silver rays. But is a man to carry this pas- "sion so far as to let a company of comedians, musi- "cians, and singers grow rich upon his exhausted "fortune? If so, he resembles one of those dead bo-

" dies, whose brains the embalmer has picked out
" through its ears." Adieu.

LETTER LXXXV.

FROM THE SAME.

OF all the places of amusement where gentlemen and ladies are entertained, I have not been yet to visit Newmarket. This, I am told, is a large field; where upon certain occasions three or four horses are brought together, then set a running, and that horse which runs fastest wins the wager.

This is reckoned a very polite and fashionable amusement here, much more followed by the nobility than partridge fighting at Java, or paper kites in Madagascar; several of the great here, I am told, understand as much of farriery as their grooms; and a horse, with any share of merit, can never want a patron among the nobility.

We have a description of this entertainment almost every day in some of the gazettes, as for instance: " On such a day the Give and Take Plate was run " for between his Grace's Crab, his Lordship's Pe- " riwinkle, and 'Squire Smackem's Slamerkin. All " rode their own horses. There was the greatest " concourse of nobility that has been known here " for several seasons. The odds were in favour of " Crab in the beginning, but Slamerkin, after the " first heat, seemed to have the match hollow; how- " ever, it was soon seen that Periwinkle improved " in wind, which at last turned out accordingly; " Crab was run to a stand-still, Slamerkin was knock- " ed up, and Periwinkle was brought in with universal

" applause." Thus you see Periwinkle received universal applause, and no doubt his Lordship came in for some share of that praise which was so liberally bestowed upon Periwinkle. Sun of China! how glorious must the Senator appear in his cap and leather breeches, his whip crossed in his mouth, and thus coming to the goal amongst the shouts of grooms, jockies, pimps, stable-bred Dukes, and degraded Generals!

From the description of this princely amusement, now transcribed, and from the great veneration I have for the characters of its principal promoters, I make no doubt but I shall look upon an horse-race with becoming reverence, pre-disposed as I am by a similar amusement, of which I have lately been a spectator; for just now I happened to have an opportunity of being present at a Cart-race.

Whether this contention between three carts of different parishes was promoted by a subscription among the nobility, or whether the grand jury, in council assembled, had gloriously combined to encourage plaustral merit, I cannot take upon me to determine; but certain it is, the whole was conducted with the utmost regularity and decorum, and the company, which made a brilliant appearance, were universally of opinion, that the sport was high, the running fine, and the riders influenced by no bribe.

It was run on the road from London to a village called Brentford, between a turnip cart, a dust cart, and a dung cart; each of the owners condescending to mount and be his own driver. The odds at starting were *dust* against *dung* five to four; but after half a mile's going, the knowing ones found themselves all on the wrong side, and it was *turnip* against the field, brass to silver.

Soon however the contest became more doubtful;

Turnip indeed kept the way, but it was perceived that Dung had better bottom. The road re-echoed with the shouts of the spectators; Dung against Turnip; Turnip against Dung, was now the universal cry; neck and neck; one rode lighter, but the other had more judgment. I could not but particularly observe the ardour with which the fair sex espoused the cause of the different riders on this occasion; one was charmed with the unwashed beauties of Dung; another was captivated with the patibulary aspect of Turnip; while in the mean time unfortunate gloomy Dust, who came whipping behind, was cheered by the encouragements of some, and pity of all.

The contention now continued for some time, without a possibility of determining to whom victory designed the prize. The winning post appeared in view, and he who drove the turnip cart assured himself of success; and successful he might have been, had his horse been as ambitious as he; but upon approaching a turn from the road, which led homewards, the horse fairly stood still, and refused to move a foot further. The dung cart had scarcely time to enjoy this temporary triumph, when it was pitched headlong into a ditch by the way-side, and the rider left to wallow in congenial mud. Dust in the mean time soon came up, and not being far from the post, came in amidst the shouts and acclamations of all the spectators, and greatly caressed by all the quality of Brentford. Fortune was kind only to one, who ought to have been favourable to all; each had peculiar merit, each laboured hard to earn the prize, and each richly deserved the cart he drove.

I do not know whether this description may not have anticipated that which I intended giving of Newmarket. I am told there is little else to be seen even there. There may be some minute differences

in the dress of the spectators, but none at all in their understandings; the quality of Brentford are as remarkable for politeness and delicacy, as the breeders of Newmarket. The quality of Brentford drive their own carts, and the honourable fraternity of Newmarket ride their own horses. In short, the matches in one place are as rational as those in the other; and it is more than probable, that turnips, dust, and dung, are all that can be found to furnish out description in either.

Forgive me, my friend, but a person like me, bred up in a philosophic seclusion, is apt to regard, perhaps with too much asperity, those occurrences which sink man below his station in nature, and diminish the intrinsic value of humanity. Adieu.

LETTER LXXXVI.

From Fum Hoam to Lien Chi Altangi.

YOU tell me the people of Europe are wise; but where lies their wisdom? You say they are valiant too; yet I have some reasons to doubt of their valour. They are engaged in war among each other, yet apply to the Russians, their neighbours and ours, for assistance. Cultivating such an alliance argues at once imprudence and timidity. All subsidies paid for such an aid is strengthening the Russians, already too powerful, and weakening the employers, already exhausted by intestine commotions.

I cannot avoid beholding the Russian empire as the natural enemy of the more Western parts of Europe; as an enemy already possessed of great strength, and, from the nature of the government, every day threatening to become more powerful. This extensive em-

pire, which, both in Europe and Asia, occupies almost a third of the old world, was, about two centuries ago, divided into separate kingdoms and dukedoms, and from such a division consequently feeble. Since the times, however, of Johan Basilides, it has increased in strength and extent; and those untrodden forests, those innumerable savage animals which formerly covered the face of the country, are now removed and colonies of mankind planted in their room. A kingdom thus enjoying peace internally, possessed of an unbounded extent of dominion, and learning the military art at the expense of others abroad, must every day grow more powerful; and it is probable we shall hear Russia, in future times, as formerly, called the Officina Gentium.

It was long the wish of Peter their great monarch, to have a fort in some of the Western parts of Europe; many of his schemes and treaties were directed to this end, but happily for Europe he failed in them all. A fort in the power of this people would be like the possession of a flood-gate; and whenever ambition, interest, or necessity prompted, they might then be able to deluge the whole Western world with a barbarous inundation.

Believe me, my friend, I cannot sufficiently contemn the politicians of Europe, who thus make this powerful people arbitrators in their quarrel. The Russians are now at that period between refinement and barbarity, which seems most adapted to military achievement, and if once they happen to get footing in the Western parts of Europe, it is not the feeble efforts of the sons of effeminacy, and dissention, that can serve to remove them. The fertile valley and soft climate will ever be sufficient inducements to draw whole myriads from their native deserts, the trackless wild, or snowy mountain.

History, experience, reason, nature, expand the book of wisdom before the eyes of mankind, but they will not read. We have seen with terror a winged phalanx of famished locusts each singly contemptible, but from multitude become hideous, cover, like clouds, the face of day, and threaten the world with ruin. We have seen them settling on the fertile plains of India and Egypt, destroying in an instant the labours and the hopes of nations; sparing neither the fruit of the earth nor the verdure of the fields, and changing into a frightful desert landscapes of once luxuriant beauty. We have seen myriads of ants issuing together from the Southern desert, like a torrent whose source was inexhaustible, succeeding each other without end, and renewing their destroyed forces with unwearied perseverance, bringing desolation wherever they came, banishing men and animals, and, when destitute of all subsistence, in heaps infecting the wilderness which they had made! Like these have been the migrations of men. When as yet savage, and almost resembling their brute partners in the forest, subject like them only to the instincts of Nature, and directed by hunger alone in the choice of an abode, how have we seen whole armies starting wild at once from their forests and their dens; Goths, Huns, Vandals, Saracens, Turks, Tartars, myriads of men, animals in human form, without country, without name, without laws, outpowering by numbers all opposition, ravaging cities, overturning empires, and, after having destroyed whole nations, and spread extensive desolation, how have we seen them sink oppressed by some new enemy, more barbarous and even more unknown than they! Adieu.

LETTER LXXXVII.

From Lien Chi Altangi to Fum Hoam, first President of the Ceremonial Academy at Pekin, in China.

As the instruction of the fair sex in this country is entirely committed to the care of foreigners; as their language-masters, music-masters, hair-frizzers, and governesses, are all from abroad, I had some intentions of opening a female academy myself, and made no doubt, as I was quite a foreigner, of meeting a favourable reception.

In this I intended to instruct the ladies in all the conjugal mysteries; wives should be taught the art of managing husbands, and maids the skill of properly choosing them; I would teach a wife how far she might venture to be sick without giving disgust; she should be acquainted with the great benefits of the cholic in the stomach, and all the thorough-bred insolence of fashion; maids should learn the secret of nicely distinguishing every competitor; they should be able to know the difference between a pedant and scholar, a citizen and a prig, a squire and his horse, a beau and his monkey; but chiefly they should be taught the art of managing their smiles, from the contemptuous simper to the long laborious laugh.

But I have discontinued the project; for what would signify teaching ladies the manner of governing or choosing husbands, when marriage is at present so much out of fashion, that a lady is very well off, who can get any husband at all. Celibacy now prevails in every rank of life, the streets are crouded with old bachelors, and the houses with ladies who have refused

good offers, and are never likely to receive any for the future.

The only advice, therefore, I could give the fair sex, as things stand at present, is to get husbands as fast as they can. There is certainly nothing in the whole creation, not even Babylon in ruins, more truly deplorable than a lady in the virgin bloom of sixty-three, nor a battered unmarried beau, who squibs about from place to place, showing his pigtail wig and his ears. The one appears to my imagination in the form of a double night-cap, or a roll of pomatum; the other in the shape of an electuary, or a box of pills.

I would once more therefore advise the ladies to get husbands. I would desire them not to discard an old lover without very sufficient reasons, nor treat the new with ill-nature till they know him false; let not prudes allege the falseness of the sex; coquets the pleasures of long courtship, or parents the necessary preliminaries of penny for penny. I have reasons that would silence even a casuist in this particular. In the first place, therefore, I divide the subject into fifteen heads, and then *sic argumentor*—but not to give you and myself the spleen, be contented at present with an Indian tale.

In a winding of the river Amidar, just before it falls into the Caspian sea, there lies an island unfrequented by the inhabitants of the Continent. In this seclusion, blest with all that wild uncultivated Nature could bestow, lived a princess and her two daughters. She had been wrecked upon the coast while her children as yet were infants, who of consequence, though grown up, were entirely unacquainted with man. Yet unexperienced as the young ladies were in the opposite sex, both early discovered symptoms, the one of prudery, the other of being a coquet. The eldest was ever learning maxims of wisdom and discretion from her

mamma, while the youngest employed all her hours in gazing at her own face in a neighbouring fountain.

Their usual amusement in this solitude was fishing: their mother had taught them all the secrets of the art; she showed them which were the most likely places to throw out the line, what baits were most proper for the various seasons, and the best manner to draw up the finny prey, when they had hooked it. In this manner they spent their time, easy and innocent, till one day, the Princess being indisposed, desired them to go and catch her a sturgeon or a shark for supper, which she fancied might sit easy on her stomach. The daughters obeyed, and clapping on a gold fish, the usual bait on those occasions, went and sat upon one of the rocks, letting the gilded hook glide down with the stream.

On the opposite shore, further down, at the mouth of the river, lived a diver for pearls; a youth, who by long habit in his trade, was almost grown amphibious; so that he could remain whole hours at the bottom of the water, without ever fetching breath. He happened to be at that very instant diving when the ladies were fishing with the gilded hook. Seeing therefore the bait, which to him had the appearance of real gold, he was resolved to seize the prize, but both his hands being already filled with pearl oysters, he found himself obliged to snap at it with his mouth: the consequence is easily imagined; the hook, before unperceived, was instantly fastened in his jaw, nor could he, with all his efforts, or his floundering get free.

"Sister," cries the youngest Princess, "I have "certainly caught a monstrous fish; I never perceiv-"ed any thing struggle so at the end of my line be-"fore; come, and help me to draw it in." They both now therefore assisted in fishing up the diver on

shore; but nothing could equal their surprise upon seeing him. "Bless my eyes," cries the prude, "what have we got here; this is a very odd fish to be "sure; I never saw any thing in my life look so "queer; what eyes, what terrible claws, what a mon- "strous snout; I have read of this monster some- "where before, it certainly must be a *Tanlang* that "eats women; let us throw it back into the sea "where we found it."

The diver in the mean time stood upon the beach, at the end of the line, with the hook in his mouth, using every art that he thought could best excite pity, and particularly looking extremely tender, which is usual in such circumstances. The coquet therefore, in some measure influenced by the innocence of his looks, ventured to contradict her companion. "Upon "my word, sister," says she, "I see nothing in the "animal so very terrible as you are pleased to appre- "hend; I think it may serve well enough for a change. "Always sharks, and sturgeons, and lobsters, and "crawfish make me quite sick. I fancy a slice of "this, nicely grilladed, and dressed up with shrimp "sauce, would be very pretty eating. I fancy mamma "would like a bit with pickles above all things in the "world; and if it should not sit easy on her stomach, "it will be time enough to discontinue it when found "disagreeable you know." "Horrid," cries the prude, "would the girl be poisoned; I tell you it is a "*Tanlang;* I have read of it in twenty places. It is "every where described as the most pernicious ani- "mal that ever infested the ocean. I am certain it is "the most insidious, ravenous creature in the world; "and is certain destruction if taken internally." The youngest sister was now therefore obliged to submit: both assisted in drawing the hook with some violence from the diver's jaw; and he, finding himself at li-

berty, bent his breast against the broad wave and disappeared in an instant.

Just at this juncture the mother came down to the beach, to know the cause of her daughters' delay; they told her every circumstance, describing the monster they had caught. The old lady was one of the most discreet women in the world; she was called the black-eyed Princess, from two black eyes she had received in her youth, being a little addicted to boxing in her liquor. "Alas, my children," cries she, "what have you done? the fish you caught was a "man-fish; one of the most tame domestic animals "in the world. We could have let him run and play "about the garden, and he would have been twenty "times more entertaining than our squirrel or mon-"key." "If that be all," says the young coquet, "we will fish for him again. If that be all, I'll hold "three tooth-picks to one pound of snuff, I catch him "whenever I please." Accordingly they threw in their line once more, but with all their gilding and paddling, and assiduity, they could never after catch the diver. In this state of solitude and disappointment they continued for many years, still fishing, but without success; till at last the genius of the place, in pity to their distresses, changed the prude into a shrimp, and the coquet into an oyster. Adieu.

LETTER LXXXVIII.

FROM THE SAME.

I AM amused, my dear Fum, with the labours of some of the learned here. One shall write you a whole folio on the dissection of a caterpillar. Another

shall swell his works with a description of the plumage on the wing of a butterfly; a third shall see a little world on a peach leaf, and publish a book to describe what his readers might see more clearly in two minutes, only by being furnished with eyes and a microscope.

I have frequently compared the understandings of such men to their own glasses. Their field of vision is too contracted to take in the whole of any but minute objects; they view all Nature bit by bit; now the proboscis, now the attennæ, now the pinnæ of—a flea. Now the polypus comes to breakfast upon a worm; now it is kept up to see how long it will live without eating; now it is turned inside outward; and now it sickens and dies. Thus they proceed, laborious in trifles, constant in experiment, without one single abstraction, by which alone knowledge may be properly said to increase; till at last their ideas, ever employed upon minute things, contract to the size of the diminutive object, and a single mite shall fill the whole mind's capacity.

Yet believe me, my friend, ridiculous as these men are to the world, they are set up as objects of esteem for each other. They have particular places appointed for their meetings; in which one shows his cockle shell, and is praised by all the society; another produces his powder, makes some experiments that result in nothing, and comes off with admiration and applause; a third comes out with the important discovery of some new process in the skeleton of a mole, and is set down as the accurate and sensible; while one still more fortunate than the rest, by pickling, potting, and preserving monsters, rises into unbounded reputation

The labours of such men, instead of being calculated to amuse the public, are laid out only in diverting

each other. The world becomes very little the better or the wiser, for knowing what is the peculiar food of an insect, that is itself the food of another, which in its turn is eaten by a third; but there are men who have studied themselves into an habit of investigating and admiring such minutiæ. To these such subjects are pleasing, as there are some who contentedly spend whole days in endeavouring to solve ænigmas, or disentangle the puzzling sticks of children.

But of all the learned, those who pretend to investigate remote antiquity, have least to plead in their own defence, when they carry this passion to a faulty excess. They are generally found to supply by conjecture the want of record, and then by perseverance are wrought up into a confidence of the truth of opinions, which even to themselves at first appeared founded only in imagination.

The Europeans have heard much of the kingdom of China: its politeness, arts, commerce, laws, and morals are however but very imperfectly known among them. They have even now in their Indian warehouse numberless utensils, plants, minerals, and machines, of the use of which they are entirely ignorant, nor can any among them even make a probable guess for what they might have been designed. Yet though this people be so ignorant of the present real state of China, the philosophers I am describing have entered into long, learned, laborious disputes about what China was two thousand years ago. China and European happiness are but little connected even at this day; but European happiness and China two thousand years ago have certainly no connexion at all. However, the learned have written on and pursued the subject through all the labyrinths of antiquity, though the early dews and the tainted gale be passed

away, though no footsteps remain to direct the doubtful chace, yet still they run forward, open upon the uncertain scent, and though in fact they follow nothing, are earnest in the pursuit. In this chace however they all take different ways. One, for example, confidently assures us, that China was peopled by a colony from Egypt. Sesostris, he observes, led his army as far as the Ganges; therefore, if he went so far, he might still have gone as far as China, which is but about a thousand miles from thence; therefore he did go to China; therefore China was not peopled before he went there; therefore it was peopled by him. Besides, the Egyptians have pyramids: the Chinese have in like manner their porcelaine tower; the Egytians used to light up candles upon every rejoicing, the Chinese have lanthorns upon the same occasion; the Egyptians had their great river, so have the Chinese; but what serves to put the matter past a doubt is, that the ancient Kings of China and those of Egypt were called by the same names. The Emperor Ki is certainly the same with King Atoes; for, if we only change *K* into *A*, and *i* into *toes*, we shall have the name Atoes; and with equal ease *Menes* may be proved to be the same with the Emperor *Yu*; therefore the Chinese are a colony from Egypt.

But another of the learned is entirely different from the last; and he will have the Chinese to be a colony planted by Noah, just after the deluge. First, from the vast similitude there is between the name of Fohi, the founder of the Chinese monarchy, and that of Noah, the preserver of the human race; Noah, Fohi, very like each other truly; they have each but four letters, and only two of the four happen to differ. But to strengthen the argument, Fohi, as the Chinese chronicle asserts, had no father Noah, it is true, had a father, as the European Bible tells us: but then,

as this father was probably drowned in the flood, it is just the same as if he had no father at all; therefore, Noah and Fohi are the same Just after the flood, the earth was covered with mud; if it was covered with mud, it must have been incrustated mud; if it was incrustated, it was clothed with verdure; this was a fine, unembarrassed road for Noah to fly from his wicked children; he therefore did fly from them, and took a journey of two thousand miles for his own amusement; therefore Noah and Fohi are the same.

Another sect of literati, for they all pass among the vulgar for very great scholars, assert, that the Chinese came neither from the colony of Sesostris, nor from Noah, but are descended from Magog, Meshec and Tubal, and therefore neither Sesostris, nor Noah, nor Fohi are the same.

It is thus, my friend, that indolence assumes the airs of wisdom, and while it tosses the cup and ball with infantine folly, desires the world to look on, and calls the stupid pastime philosophy and learning.

Adieu.

LETTER LXXXIX.

FROM THE SAME.

WHEN the men of this country are once turned of thirty, they regularly retire every year at proper intervals to lie in of the *spleen*. The vulgar, unfurnished with the luxurious comforts of the soft cushion, down bed, and easy-chair, are obliged when the fit is on them, to nurse it up by drinking, idleness and ill-humour. In such dispositions, unhappy is the foreigner who happens to cross them; his long chin, tarnished

coat, or pinched hat are sure to receive no quarter. If they meet no foreigner however to fight with, they are in such cases generally content with beating each other.

The rich, as they have more sensibility, are operated upon with greater violence by this disorder. Different from the poor, instead of becoming more insolent, they grow totally unfit for opposition. A general here, who would have faced a culverin when well, if the fit be on him, shall hardly find courage to snuff a candle. An admiral, who could have opposed a broadside without shrinking, shall sit whole days in his chamber, mobbed up in double night-caps, shuddering at the intrusive breeze, and distinguishable from his wife only by his black beard and heavy eyebrows.

In the country this disorder mostly attacks the fair sex, in town it is most unfavourable to the men. A lady who has pined whole years amidst cooing doves, and complaining nightingales in rural retirement, shall resume all her vivacity in one night at a city gambling-table; her husband, who roared, hunted, and got drunk at home, shall grow splenetic in town in proportion to his wife's good humour. Upon their arrival in London, they exchange their disorders. In consequence of her parties and excursions, he puts on the furred cap and scarlet stomacher, and perfectly resembles an Indian husband, who when his wife is safely delivered, permits her to transact business abroad, while he undergoes all the formality of keeping his bed, and receiving all the condolence in her place.

But those who reside constantly in town, owe this disorder mostly to the influence of the weather. It is impossible to describe what a variety of transmutations an East wind will produce; it has been known

to change a lady of fashion into a parlour couch, an alderman into a plate of custards, and a dispenser of justice into a rat trap. Even philosophers themselves are not exempt from its influence; it has often converted a poet into a coral and bells, and a patriot senator into a dumb waiter.

Some days ago I went to visit the man in black, and entered his house with that cheerfulness, which the certainty of a favourable reception always inspires. Upon opening the door of his apartment, I found him with the most rueful face imaginable, in a morning gown and flannel night-cap, earnestly employed in learning to blow the German flute. Struck with the absurdity of a man in the decline of life, thus blowing away all his constitution and spirits, even without the consolation of being musical, I ventured to ask what could induce him to attempt learning so difficult an instrument so late in life. To this he made no reply, but groaning, and still holding the flute to his lips, continued to gaze at me for some moments very angrily, and then proceeded to practise his gamut as before. After having produced a variety of the most hideous tones in nature; at last turning to me, he demanded, whether I did not think he had made a surprising progress in two days? You see, continues he, I have got the Ambusheer already, and as for fingering, my master tells me, I shall have that in a few lessons more. I was so much astonished with this instance of inverted ambition, that I knew not what to reply; but soon discerned the cause of all his absurdities; my friend was under a metamorphosis by the power of spleen, and flute-blowing was unluckily become his adventitious passion.

In order therefore to banish his anxiety imperceptibly, by seeming to indulge it, I began to descant on those gloomy topics by which philosophers often get

rid of their own spleen, by communicating it; the wretchedness of a man in this life, the happiness of some wrought out of the miseries of others, the necessity that wretches should expire under punishment, that rogues might enjoy affluence in tranquillity; I led him on from the inhumanity of the rich, to the ingratitude of the beggar; from the insincerity of refinement to the fierceness of rusticity; and at last had the good fortune to restore him to his usual serenity of temper, by permitting him to expatiate upon all the modes of human misery.

"Some nights ago," says my friend, "sitting alone "by my fire, I happened to look into an account of "the detection of a set of men called the thief-takers. "I read over the many hideous cruelties of those ha- "ters of mankind, of their pretended friendship to "wretches they meant to betray, of their sending "men out to rob and then hanging them. I could not "avoid sometimes interrupting the narrative by cry- "ing out, *Yet these are men!* As I went on, I was "informed that they had lived by this practice seve- "ral years, and had been enriched by the price of "blood; *and yet*, cried I, *I have been sent into the world*, "*and am desired to call these men brothers!* I read "that the very man who led the condemned wretch "to the gallows, was he who falsely swore his life "away; *and yet*, continued I, *that perjurer had just* "*such a nose, such lips, such hands, and such eyes as* "*Newton*. I at last came to the account of the wretch "that was searched after robbing one of the thief-ta- "kers of half-a-crown. Those of the confederacy "knew that he had got but that single half-crown in "the world: after a long search therefore, which, "they knew would be fruitless, and taking from him "the half-crown, which they knew was all he had, "one of the gang compassionately cried out, *Alas!*

" *poor creature, let him keep all the rest he has got, it* " *will do him service in Newgate, where we are sending* " *him.* This was an instance of such complicated " guilt and hypocrisy, that I threw down the book in " an agony of rage, and began to think with malice of " all the human kind. I sat silent for some minutes, " and soon perceiving the ticking of my watch begin- " ning to grow noisy and troublesome, I quickly pla- " ced it out of hearing, and strove to resume my se- " renity. But the watch-man soon gave me a second " alarm. I had scarcely recovered from this, when " my peace was assaulted by the wind at my window ; " and when that ceased to blow, I listened for death- " watches in the wainscot. I now found my whole " system discomposed. I strove to find a resource in " philosophy and reason ; but what could I oppose, " or where direct my blow, when I could see no ene- " my to combat. I saw no misery approaching, nor " knew any I had to fear, yet still I was miserable. " Morning came ; I sought for tranquillity in dissipa- " tion, sauntered from one place of public resort to " another, but found myself disagreeable to my ac- " quaintance, and ridiculous to others. I tried at dif- " ferent times, dancing, fencing, and riding ; I solved " geometrical problems, shaped tobacco-stoppers ; " wrote verses, and cut paper. At last I placed my " affections on music, and find, that earnest employ- " ment if it cannot cure, at least will palliate every " anxiety." Adieu.

LETTER XC.

FROM THE SAME.

IT is no unpleasing contemplation to consider the influence which soil and climate have upon the disposition of the inhabitants, the animals and vegetables of different countries. That among the brute creation is much more visible than in man, and that in vegetables more than either. In some places those plants which are entirely poisonous at home, lose their deleterious quality by being carried abroad; there are serpents in Macedonia so harmless, as to be used as playthings for children, and we are told that in some parts of Fez, there are lions so very timorous as to be scared away, though coming in herds, by the cries of women.

I know of no country where the influence of climate and soil is more visible than in England; the same hidden cause which gives courage to their dogs and cocks, gives also fierceness to their men. But chiefly this ferocity appears among the vulgar. The polite of every country pretty nearly resemble each other. But as in simpleing, it is among the uncultivated productions of Nature, we are to examine the characteristic differences of climate and soil, so in an estimate of the genius of the people we must look among the sons of unpolished rusticity. The vulgar English therefore may be easily distinguished from all the rest of the world, by superior pride, impatience, and a peculiar hardiness of soul.

Perhaps no qualities in the world are more susceptible of a fine polish than these; artificial complaisance and easy deference being superinduced over

these generally form a great character; something at once elegant and majestic, affable yet sincere. Such in general are the better sort; but they who are left in primitive rudeness are the least disposed for society with others, or comfort internally, of any people under the sun.

The poor indeed of every country are but little prone to treat each other with tenderness; their own miseries are too apt to engross all their pity; and perhaps too they give but little commiseration, as they find but little from others. But in England the poor treat each other upon every occasion with more than savage animosity, and as if they were in a state of open war by nature. In China, if two porters should meet in a narrow street, they would lay down their burthens, make a thousand excuses to each other for the accidental interruption, and beg pardon on their knees; if two men of the same occupation should meet here, they would first begin to scold, and at last to beat each other. One would think they had miseries enough resulting from penury and labour not to increase them by ill-nature among themselves, and subjection to new penalties; but such considerations never weigh with them.

But to recompense this strange absurdity they are in the main generous, brave, and enterprising. They feel the slightest injuries with a degree of ungoverned impatience, but resist the greatest calamities with surprising fortitude. Those miseries under which any other people in the world would sink, they have often showed they were capable of enduring; if accidentally cast upon some desolate coast, their perseverance is beyond what any other nation is capable of sustaining; if imprisoned for crimes, their efforts to escape are greater than among others. The peculiar strength of their prisons, when compared to

those elsewhere, argues their hardiness; even the strongest prisons I have ever seen in other countries would be very insufficient to confine the untameable spirit of an Englishman. In short, what man dares do in circumstances of danger, an Englishman will. His virtues seem to sleep in the calm, and are called out only to combat the kindred storm.

But the greatest eulogy of this people is the generosity of their miscreants; the tenderness in general of their robbers and highwaymen. Perhaps no people can produce instances of the same kind, where the desperate mix pity with injustice; still show that they understand a distinction in crimes, and even in acts of violence have still some tincture of remaining virtue. In every other country robbery and murder go almost always together; here it seldom happens, except upon ill-judged resistance or pursuit. The banditti of other countries are unmerciful to a supreme degree; the highwayman and robber here are generous at least in their intercourse among each other. Taking therefore my opinion of the English from the virtues and vices practised among the vulgar, they at once present to a stranger all their faults, and keep their virtues up only for the inquiring eye of a philosopher.

Foreigners are generally shocked at their insolence upon first coming among them; they find themselves ridiculed and insulted in every street; they meet with none of those trifling civilities, so frequent elsewhere, which are instances of mutual good-will without previous acquaintance; they travel through the country either too ignorant or too obstinate to cultivate a closer acquaintance, meet every moment something to excite their disgust, and return home to characterise this as the region of spleen, insolence, and ill-nature. In short, England would be the last place in the world

I would travel to by way of amusement; but the first for instruction. I would choose to have others for my acquaintance, but Englishmen for my friends.

LETTER XCI.

TO THE SAME.

THE mind is ever ingenious in making its own distress. The wandering beggar, who has none to protect, to feed, or to shelter him, fancies complete happiness in labour and a full meal; take him from rags and want, feed, clothe, and employ him, his wishes now rise one step above his station; he could be happy were he possessed of raiment, food, and ease. Suppose his wishes gratified even in these, his prospects widen as he ascends; he finds himself in affluence and tranquillity indeed, but indolence soon breeds anxiety, and he desires not only to be freed from pain, but to be possessed of pleasure; pleasure is granted him, and this but opens his soul to ambition, and ambition will be sure to taint his future happiness, either with jealousy, disappointment, or fatigue.

But of all the arts of distress found out by man for his own torment, perhaps, that of philosophic misery is most truly ridiculous, a passion no where carried to so extravagant an excess as in the country where I now reside. It is not enough to engage all the compassion of a philosopher here, that his own globe is harassed with wars, pestilence, or babarity, he shall grieve for the inhabitants of the moon, if the situation of her imaginary mountains happen to alter; and dread the extinction of the sun, if the spots on his surface happen to increase: one should imagine, that philose-

phy was introduced to make men happy; but here it serves to make hundreds miserable.

My landlady some days ago brought me the diary of a philosopher of this desponding sort, who had lodged in the apartment before me. It contains the history of a life, which seems to be one continued tissue of sorrow, apprehension, and distress. A single week will serve as a specimen of the whole.

Monday. In what a transient decaying situation are we placed, and what various reasons does philosophy furnish to make mankind unhappy! A single grain of mustard shall continue to produce its similitude through numberless successions; yet what has been granted to this little seed, has been denied to our planetary system; the mustard-seed is still unaltered, but the system is growing old, and must quickly fall to decay. How terrible will it be, when the motions of all the planets have at last become so irregular, as to need repairing, when the moon shall fall into frightful paroxysms of alteration, when the earth, deviating from its ancient track, and with every other planet forgetting its circular revolutions, shall become so eccentric, that unconfined by the laws of system, it shall fly off into boundless space, to knock against some distant world, or fall in upon the sun, either extinguishing his light, or burned up by his flames in a moment. Perhaps while I write, this dreadful change is begun. Shield me from universal ruin! Yet ideot man laughs, sings, and rejoices in the very face of the sun, and seems no way touched with his situation.

Tuesday. Went to bed in great distress, awaked and was comforted, by considering that this change was to happen at some indefinite time, and, therefore, like death, the thoughts of it might easily be borne. But there is a revolution, a fixed determined revolution, which must certainly come to pass; yet which,

by good fortune, I shall never feel, except in my posterity. The obliquity of the equator with the ecliptic, is now twenty minutes less than when it was observed two thousand years ago by *Piteas*. If this be the case, in six thousand the obliquity will be still less by an whole degree. This being supposed, it is evident, that our earth, as Louville has clearly proved, has a motion, by which the climates must necessarily change place, and in the space of about one million of years, England shall actually travel to the Antarctic pole. I shudder at the change! How shall our unhappy grandchildren endure the hideous climate! A million of years will soon be accomplished: they are but a moment when compared to eternity; then shall our charming country, as I may say, in a moment of time, resemble the hideous wilderness of Nova Zembla.

Wednesday. To-night by my calculation, the long predicted comet is to make its first appearance. Heavens! what terrors are impending over our little dim speck of earth! Dreadful visitation! Are we to be scorched in its fires, or only smothered in the vapour of its tail? That is the question! Thoughtless mortals, go build houses, plant orchards, purchase estates, for to-morrow you die. But what if the comet should not come? That would be equally fatal. Comets are servants which periodically return to supply the sun with fuel. If our sun therefore should be disappointed of the expected supply, and all his fuel be in the mean time burnt out, he must expire like an exhausted taper. What a miserable situation must our earth be in without his enlivening ray! Have we not seen several neighbouring suns entirely disappear? Has not a fixed star near the tail of the Ram lately been quite extinguished?

Thursday. The comet has not yet appeared; I am sorry for it: first, sorry because my calculation is false: secondly, sorry lest the sun should want fuel: thirdly, sorry lest the wits should laugh at our erroneous predictions: and fourthly, sorry because if it appears to-night, it must necessarily come within the sphere of the earth's attraction; and Heaven help the unhappy country on which it happens to fall.

Friday. Our whole society have been out all eager in search of the comet. We have seen not less than sixteen comets in different parts of the heavens. However, we are unanimously resolved to fix upon one only to be the comet expected. That near Virgo wants nothing but a tail to fit it out completely for terrestrial admiration.

Saturday. The moon is I find at her old pranks. Her appulses, librations, and other irregularities indeed amaze me. My daughter too is this morning gone off with a grenadier. No way surprising. I was never able to give her a relish for wisdom. She ever promised to be a mere expletive in the creation. But the moon, the moon gives me real uneasiness; I fondly fancied I had fixed her I had thought her constant, and constant only to me; but every night discovers her infidelity, and proves me a desolate and abandoned lover. Adieu.

LETTER XCII.

TO THE SAME.

IT is surprising what an influence titles shall have upon the mind, even though these titles be of our own making. Like children we dress up the puppets in

finery, and then stand in astonishment at the plastic wonder. I have been told of a rat-catcher here, who strolled for a long time about the villages near town, without finding any employment; at last, however, he thought proper to take the title of his Majesty's rat-catcher in ordinary, and this succeeded beyond his expectations; when it was known that he caught rats at court, all were ready to give him countenance and employment.

But of all the people, they who make books seem most perfectly sensible of the advantage of titular dignity. All seem convinced, that a book written by vulgar hands, can neither instruct nor improve; none but Kings, Chams, and Mandarines, can write with any probability of success. If the titles inform me right, not only Kings and Courtiers, but Emperors themselves in this country periodically supply the press.

A man here who should write, and honestly confess that he wrote for bread, might as well send his manuscript to fire the baker's oven; not one creature will read him; all must be court-bred poets, or pretend at least to be court-bred, who can expect to please. Should the caitiff fairly avow a design of emptying our pockets and filling his own, every reader would instantly forsake him; even those who write for bread themselves, would combine to worry him, perfectly sensible, that his attempts only served to take the bread out of their mouths.

And yet this silly prepossession the more amazes me, when I consider, that almost all the excellent productions in wit that have appeared here, were purely the offspring of necessity; their Drydens, Butlers, Otways, and Farquhars were all writers for bread. Believe me, my friend, hunger has a most amazing faculty for sharpening the genius; and he

who with a full belly, can think like a hero, after a course of fasting, shall rise to the sublimity of a demi-god.

But what will most amaze is, that this very set of men, who are now so much depreciated by fools, are however, the very best writers they have among them at present. For my own part, were I to buy an hat, I would not have it from a stocking-maker, but an hatter; were I to buy shoes, I should not go to the tailor's for that purpose. It is just so with regard to wit: did I, for my life, desire to be well-served, I would apply only to those who made it their trade, and lived by it. You smile at the oddity of my opinion; but be assured, my friend, that wit is in some measure mechanical; and that a man long habituated to catch at even its resemblance, will at last be happy enough to possess the substance: by a long habit of writing he acquires a justness of thinking, and a mastery of manner, which holiday-writers, even with ten times his genius, may vainly attempt to equal.

How then are they deceived, who expect from title, dignity, and exterior circumstance an excellence, which is in some measure acquired by habit, and sharpened by necessity; you have seen, like me, many literary reputations promoted by the influence of fashion, which have scarcely survived the possessor; you have seen the poor hardly earn the little reputation they acquired, and their merit only acknowledged when they were incapable of enjoying the pleasures of popularity; such however, is the reputation worth possessing, that which is hardly earned is hardly lost. Adieu.

LETTER XCIII.

From Hingpo, in Moscow, to Lien Chi Altangi, in London.

WHERE will my disappointment end? Must I still be doomed to accuse the severity of my fortune, and show my constancy in distress rather than moderation in prosperity? I had at least hopes of conveying my charming companion safe from the reach of every enemy, and of again restoring her to her native soil. But those hopes are now no more.

Upon leaving Terki, we took the nearest road to the dominions of Russia. We passed the Ural mountains covered with eternal snow, and traversed the forests of Usa, where the prowling bear and shrieking hyena keep an undisputed possession. We next embarked upon the rapid river Bulija, and made the best of our way to the banks of the Wolga, where it waters the fruitful valleys of Casan.

There were two vessels in company properly equipped and armed in order to oppose the Wolga pirates, who we were informed infested this river. Of all mankind these pirates are the most terrible. They are composed of the criminals and outlawed peasants of Russia, who fly to the forests that lie along the banks of the Wolga for protection. Here they join in parties, lead a savage life, and have no other subsistence but plunder. Being deprived of houses, friends, or a fixed habitation, they become more terrible even than the tyger, and as insensible to all the feelings of humanity. They neither give quarter to those they conquer, nor receive it when overpowered themselves. The severity of the laws against them serve to increase their barbarity, and seem to

make them a neutral species of beings between the wildness of the lion and the subtlety of the man. When taken alive their punishment is hideous. A floating gibbet is erected, which is let run down with the stream; here, upon an iron hook stuck under their ribs, and upon which the whole weight of their body depends, they are left to expire in the most terrible agonies; some being thus found to linger several days successively.

We were but three days voyage from the confluence of this river into the Wolga, when we perceived at a distance behind us an armed barque coming up with the assistance of sails and oars, in order to attack us. The dreadful signal of death was hung upon the mast, and our captain with his glass could easily discern them to be pirates. It is impossible to express our consternation on this occasion; the whole crew instantly came together to consult the properest means of safety. It was therefore soon determined to send off our women and valuable commodities in one of our vessels, and that the men should stay in the other, and boldly oppose the enemy. This resolution was soon put into execution, and I now reluctantly parted from the beautiful Zelis for the first time since our retreat from Persia. The vessel in which she was, disappeared to my longing eyes, in proportion as that of the pirates approached us. They soon came up; but upon examining our strength, and perhaps sensible of the manner in which we had sent off our most valuable effects, they seemed more eager to pursue the vessel we had sent away than attack us. In this manner they continued to harass us for three days; still endeavouring to pass us without fighting. But on the fourth day, finding it entirely impossible, and despairing to seize the expected boo-

ty, they desisted from their endeavours, and left us to pursue our voyage without interruption.

Our joy on this occasion was great; but soon a disappointment more terrible, because unexpected, succeeded. The barque, in which our women and treasure were sent off, was wrecked upon the banks of the Wolga, for want of a proper number of hands to manage her, and the whole crew carried by the peasants up the country. Of this however we were not sensible till our arrival at Moscow; where expecting to meet our separated barque, we were informed of its misfortune, and our loss. Need I paint the situation of my mind on this occasion! Need I describe all I feel, when I despair of beholding the beautiful Zelis more! Fancy had dressed the future prospect of my life in the gayest colouring; but one unexpected stroke of fortune has robbed it of every charm. Her dear idea mixes with every scene of pleasure, and without her presence to enliven it, the whole becomes tedious, insipid, insupportable. I will confess, now that she is lost; I will confess, I loved her; nor is it in the power of time, or of reason, to erase her image from my heart. Adieu.

LETTER XCIV.

From Lien Chi Altangi to Hingpo, at Moscow *.

YOUR misfortunes are mine; but as every period of life is marked with its own, you must learn to endure them. Disappointed love makes the misery of

* This letter is a rhapsody from the Maxims of the philosopher Mê. Vide Lett. curieuse & edifiant. Vide etiam Du Halde, Vol. II. p. 98.

youth; disappointed ambition that of manhood; and successful avarice that of age. These three attack us through life; and it is our duty to stand upon our guard. To love we ought to oppose dissipation, and endeavour to change the object of the affections; to ambition the happiness of indolence and obscurity; and to avarice the fear of soon dying. These are the shields with which we should arm ourselves; and thus make every scene of life, if not pleasing, at least supportable.

Men complain of not finding a place of repose. They are in the wrong; they have it for seeking. What they should indeed complain of is, that the heart is an enemy to that very repose they seek. To themselves alone should they impute their discontent. They seek within the short span of life to satisfy a thousand desires, each of which alone is insatiable. One month passes, and another comes on; the year ends and then begins; but man is still unchanging in folly, still blindly continuing in prejudice. To the wise man every climate and every soil is pleasing; to him a parterre of flowers is the famous valley of gold; to him a little brook *the fountain of the young peach trees* *; to such a man, the melody of birds is more ravishing than the harmony of a full concert; and the tincture of the cloud preferable to the touch of the finest pencil.

The life of man is a journey; a journey that must be travelled, however bad the roads or the accommodation. If in the beginning it is found dangerous, narrow, and difficult, it must either grow better in the end, or we shall by custom learn to bear its inequality.

But though I see you incapable of penetrating into

* This passage the editor does not understand.

grand principles, attend at least to a simile adapted to every apprehension. I am mounted upon a wretched ass. I see another man before me upon a sprightly horse, at which I find some uneasiness. I look behind me and see numbers on foot stooping under heavy burdens; let me learn to pity their estate, and thank Heaven for my own.

Shingfu, when under misfortunes, would in the beginning weep like a child; but he soon recovered his former tranquillity. After indulging grief for a few days, he would become as usual, the most merry old man in all the province of Shansi. About the time that his wife died, his possessions were all consumed by fire, and his only son sold into captivity: Shingfu grieved for one day, and the next went to dance at a Mandarine's door for his dinner. The company were surprised to see the old man so merry when suffering such great losses, and the Mandarine himself coming out, asked him how he, who had grieved so much, and given way to the calamity the day before, could now be so cheerful? You "ask me one question," cries the old man, "let me answer by asking another: "Which is the most durable, a hard thing, or a soft "thing: that which resists, or that which makes no "resistance?" *An hard thing to be sure*, replied the Mandarine. "There you are wrong," returned Shingfu, "I am now fourscore years old; and if you look "in my mouth, you will find that I have lost all my "teeth, but not a bit of my tongue."

LETTER XCV.

From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first President of the Ceremonial Academy at Pekin, in China.

THE manner of grieving for our departed friends in China, is very different from that of Europe. The mourning colour of Europe is black; that of China white. When a parent or relation dies here, for they seldom mourn for friends, it is only clapping on a suit of sable, grimacing it for a few days, and all soon forgotten, goes on as before; not a single creature missing the deceased, except perhaps a favourite housekeeper or a favourite cat.

On the contrary with us in China, it is a very serious affair. The piety with which I have seen you behave on one of these occasions, should never be forgotten. I remember it was upon the death of thy grandmother's maiden-sister. The coffin was exposed in the principal hall in public view. Before it were placed the figures of eunuchs, horses, tortoises, and other animals in attitudes of grief and respect. The more distant relations of the old lady, and I among the number, came to pay our compliments of condolence, and to salute the deceased after the manner of our country. We had scarcely presented our wax candles and perfumes, and giving the howl of departure, when, crawling on his belly from under a curtain, out came the reverend Fum Hoam himself, in all the dismal solemnity of distress. Your looks were set for sorrow; your clothing consisted of an hempen bag tied round the neck with a string. For two long months did this mourning continue. By night you lay stretched on a single mat, and sat on the stool of discontent by day.

Pious man! who could thus set an example of sorrow and decorum to our country. Pious country! where, if we do not grieve at the departure of our friends for their sakes, at least we are taught to regret them for our own.

All is very different here: amazement all! What sort of a people am I got amongst! Fum, thou son of Fo, what sort of people am I got amongst! No crawling round the coffin; no dressing up in hempen bags; no lying on mats, or sitting on stools. Gentlemen here shall put on first mourning with as sprightly an air as if preparing for a birth-night; and widows shall actually dress for another husband in their weeds for the former. The best jest of all is, that our merry mourners clap bits of muslin on their sleeves, and these are called *weepers*. Weeping muslin; alas, alas, very sorrowful truly! These weepers then it seems are to bear the whole burthen of the distress.

But I have had the strongest instance of this contrast; this tragi-comical behaviour in distress upon a recent occasion. Their King, whose departure, though sudden, was not unexpected, died after a reign of many years. His age and uncertain state of health served in some measure to diminish the sorrow of his subjects; and their expectations from his successor seemed to balance their minds between uneasiness and satisfaction. But how ought they to have behaved on such an occasion? Surely, they ought rather to have endeavoured to testify their *gratitude* to their deceased friend, than to proclaim their *hopes* of the future. Surely even the Successor must suppose their love to wear the face of adulation, which so quickly changed the object. However, the very same day on which the old king died, they made rejoicing for the new.

For my part, I have no conception of this new man-

ner of mourning and rejoicing in a breath; of being merry and sad; of mixing a funeral procession with a jig and a bonfire. At least, it would have been just, that they who flattered the King while living for virtues which he had not, should lament him dead for those he really had.

In this universal cause for national distress, as I had no interest myself, so it is but natural to suppose, I felt no real affliction. In all the losses of our friends, says an European philosopher, we first consider how much our own welfare is affected by their departure, and moderate our real grief just in the same proportion. Now, as I had neither received nor expected to receive favours from Kings or their flatterers; as I had no acquaintance in particular with their late monarch; as I knew that the place of a king is soon supplied; and as the Chinese proverb has it, that though the world may sometimes want coblers to mend their shoes, there is no danger of its wanting Emperors to rule their kingdoms; from such considerations I could bear the loss of a King with the most philosophic resignation. However, I thought it my duty at least to appear sorrowful; to put on a melancholy aspect, or to set my face by that of the people.

The first company I came amongst after the news became general, was a set of jolly companions who were drinking prosperity to the ensuing reign. I entered the room with looks of despair, and even expected applause for the superlative misery of my countenance. Instead of that, I was universally condemned by the company for a grimacing son of a whore, and desired to take away my penitential phyz to some other quarter. I now corrected my former mistake, and with the most sprightly air imaginable entered a company where they were talking over the ceremonies of the approaching funeral. Here I sat

for some time with an air of pert vivacity ; when one of the chief mourners immediately observing my good humour, desired me, if I pleased, to go and grin somewhere else ; they wanted no disaffected scoundrels there. Leaving this company therefore, I was resolved to assume a look perfectly neutral ; and have ever since been studying the fashionable air ; something between jest and earnest ; a complete virginity of face, uncontaminated with the smallest symptom of meaning.

But though grief be a very slight affair here, the mourning, my friend, is a very important concern. When an Emperor dies in China, the whole expense of the solemnities is defrayed from the royal coffers. When the great die here, Mandarines are ready enough to order mourning ; but I do not see they are so ready to pay for it. If they send me down from court the gray undress frock, or the black coat without pocket holes, I am willing enough to comply with their commands, and wear both ; but by the head of Confucius ! to be obliged to wear black, and buy it into the bargain, is more than my tranquillity of temper can bear. What, order me to wear mourning before they know whether I can buy it or no ! Fum, thou son of Fo, what sort of a people am I amongst ; where being out of black is a certain symptom of poverty ; where those who have miserable faces, cannot have mourning, and those who have mourning will not wear a miserable face ?

LETTER XCVI.

FROM THE SAME.

IT is usual for the booksellers here, when a book has given universal pleasure upon one subject, to bring out several more upon the same plan; which are sure to have purchasers and readers from that desire which all men have to view a pleasing object on every side. The first performance serves rather to awaken than satisfy attention: and when that is once moved, the slightest effort serves to continue its progression; the merit of the first diffuses a light sufficient to illuminate the succeeding efforts; and no other subject can be relished, till that is exhausted. A stupid work coming thus immediately in the train of an applauded performance, weans the mind from the object of its pleasure; and resembles the sponge thrust into the mouth of a discharged culverin, in order to adapt it for a new explosion.

This manner, however, of drawing off a subject, or a peculiar mode of writing to the dregs, effectually precludes a revival of that subject or manner for some time for the future; the sated reader turns from it with a kind of literary nausea; and though the titles of books are the part of them most read, yet he has scarcely perseverance enough to wade through the title page.

Of this number I own myself one; I am now grown callous to several subjects, and different kinds of composition; whether such originally pleased, I will not take upon me to determine; but at present I spurn a new book merely upon seeing its name in an advertisement; nor have the smallest curiosity to look

beyond the first leaf, even though in the second the author promises his own face neatly engraved on copper.

I am become a perfect epicure in reading; plain beef or solid mutton, will never do. I am for a Chinese dish of bear's claws, and bird's nests. I am for sauce strong with assafœtida, or fuming with garlic. For this reason there are a hundred very wise, learned, virtuous, well-intended productions that have no charms for me. Thus, for the soul of me, I could never find courage nor grace enough to wade above two pages deep into *Thoughts upon God and Nature*, or *Thoughts upon Providence*, or *Thoughts upon free Grace*, or indeed, into Thoughts upon any thing at all. I can no longer meditate with Meditations for every day in the year; Essays upon divers subjects cannot allure me, though never so interesting; and as for Funeral Sermons, or even Thanksgiving Sermons, I can neither weep with the one, nor rejoice with the other.

But it is chiefly in gentle poetry, where I seldom look further than the title. The truth is, I take up books to be told something new; but here, as it is now managed, the reader is told nothing. He opens the book and there finds very good words truly, and much exactness of rhyme, but no information. A parcel of gaudy images pass on before his imagination like the figures in a dream; but curiosity, induction, reason, and the whole train of affections are fast asleep. The *jucunda et idonea vitæ;* those sallies which mend the heart while they amuse the fancy, are quite forgotten: so that a reader who would take up some modern applauded performances of this kind, must, in order to be pleased, first leave his good sense behind him, take for his recompense and guide bloated and compound epithet, and dwell on paintings, just indeed, because laboured with minute exactness.

If we examine, however, our internal sensations, we shall find ourselves but little pleased with such laboured vanities; we shall find that our applause rather proceeds from a kind of contagion caught up from others, and which we contribute to diffuse, than from what we privately feel. There are some subjects of which almost all the world perceive the futility; yet all combine in imposing upon each other, as worthy of praise. But chiefly this imposition obtains in literature, where men publicly contemn what they relish with rapture in private, and approve abroad what has given them disgust at home. The truth is, we deliver those criticisms in public which are supposed to be best calculated not to do justice to the author, but to impress others with an opinion of our superior discernment.

But let works of this kind, which have already come off with such applause, enjoy it all. It is neither my wish to diminish, as I was never considerable enough to add to their fame. But for the future I fear there are many poems, of which I shall find spirits to read but the title. In the first place, all odes upon winter or summer, or autumn; in short all odes, epodes, and monodies whatsoever shall hereafter be deemed too polite, classical, obscure, and refined to be read, and entirely above human comprehension. Pastorals are pretty enough—for those that like them—but to me Thyrsis is one of the most insipid fellows I ever conversed with; and as for Corydon, I do not choose his company. Elegies and epistles are very fine to those to whom they are addressed; and as for epic poems, I am generally able to discover the whole plan in reading the two first pages.

Tragedies, however, as they are now made, are good instructive moral *sermons* enough; and it would be a fault not to be pleased with *good things*. There

I learn several great truths; as, that it is impossible to see into the ways of futurity; that punishment always attends the villain, that love is the fond soother of the human breast, that we should not resist heaven's will, for in resisting heaven's will heaven's will is resisted; with several other sentiments equally new, delicate and striking. Every new tragedy therefore I shall go to see; for reflections of this nature make a tolerable harmony, when mixed up with a proper quantity of drum, trumpet, thunder, lightning, or the scene shifter's whistle. Adieu.

LETTER XCVII.

From Lien Chi Altangi to Fum Hoam, first President of the Ceremonial Academy at Pekin, in China.

I HAD some intentions lately of going to visit Bedlam, the place where those who go mad are confined. I went to wait upon the man in black to be my conductor, but I found him preparing to go to Westminster-hall, where the English hold their courts of justice. It gave me some surprise to find my friend engaged in a law-suit, but more so, when he informed me that it had been depending for several years. *How is it possible*, cried I, *for a man who knows the world to go to law; I am well acquainted with the courts of justice in China, they resemble rat-traps every one of them, nothing more easy than to get in, but to get out again is attended with some difficulty, and more cunning than rats are generally found to possess!*

Faith, replied my friend, I should not have gone to law but that I was assured of success before I began: things were presented to me in so alluring a light, that

I thought by barely declaring myself a candidate for the prize, I had nothing more to do than to enjoy the fruits of the victory. Thus have I been upon the eve of an imaginary triumph every term these ten years, have travelled forward with victory ever in my view, but ever out of reach; however, at present I fancy we have hampered our antagonist in such a manner, that without some unforseen demur, we shall this day lay him fairly on his back.

If things be so situated, said I, *I do not care if I attend you to the courts and partake in the pleasure of your success. But prithee*, continued I, as we set forward, *what reasons have you to think an affair at last concluded, which has given so many former disappointments?* My lawyer tells me, returned he, that I have Salkeld and Ventris strong in my favour, and that there are no less than fifteen cases in point. *I understand*, said I, *those are two of your judges who have already declared their opinions.* Pardon me, replied my friend, Salkeld and Ventris are lawyers who some hundred years ago gave their opinions on cases similar to mine; these opinions which make for me, my lawyer is to cite, and those opinions which look another way are cited by the lawyer employed by my antagonist; as I observed, I have Salkeld and Ventris for me, he has Coke and Hale for him, and he that has most opinions is most likely to carry his cause. *But where is the necessity*, cried I, *of prolonging a suit by citing the opinions and reports of others, since the same good sense which determined lawyers in former ages may serve to guide your judges at this day. They at that time gave their opinions only from the light of reason, your judges have the same light at present to direct them; let me even add a greater, as in former ages there were many prejudices from which the present is happily free. If arguing from authorities be exploded*

from every other branch of learning, why should it be particularly adhered to in this? I plainly foresee how such a method of investigation must embarrass every suit, and even perplex the student; ceremonies will be multiplied, formalities must increase, and more time will thus be spent in learning the arts of litigation than in the discovery of right.

I see, cries my friend, that you are for a speedy administration of justice, but all the world will grant that the more time that is taken up in considering any subject the better it will be understood. Besides, it is the boast of an Englishman, that his property is secure, and all the world will grant that a deliberate administration of justice is the best way to *secure his property.* Why have we so many lawyers, *but to secure our property*, why so many formalities, but *to secure our property?* Not less than one hundred thousand families live in opulence, elegance and ease, merely by *securing our property.*

To embarrass justice, returned I, by a multiplicity of laws, or to hazard it by a confidence in our judges, are, I grant, the opposite rocks on which legislative wisdom has ever split; in one case the client resembles that emperor, who is said to have been suffocated with the bedclothes, which were only designed to keep him warm: in the other, to that town which let the enemy take possession of its walls, in order to show the world how little they depended upon aught but courage for safety:——But bless me, what numbers do I see here—all in black—how is it possible that half this multitude find employment? Nothing so easily conceived, returned my companion, they live by watching each other. For instance, the catchpole watches the man in debt, the attorney watches the catchpole, the counsellor watches the attorney, the

solicitor the counsellor, and all find sufficient employment. I conceive you, interrupted I, they watch each other, but it is the client that pays them all for watching; it puts me in mind of a Chinese fable, which is intituled, *Five animals at a meal.*

A grasshopper filled with dew, was merrily singing under a shade; a whangam that eats grasshoppers had marked it for its prey, and was just stretching forth to devour it; a serpent that had for a long time fed only on whangams, was coiled up to fasten on the whangam; a yellow bird was just upon the wing to dart upon the serpent; a hawk had just stooped from above to seize the yellow bird; all were intent on their prey, and unmindful of their danger: so the whangam eat the grasshopper, the serpent eat the whangam, the yellow bird the serpent, and the hawk the yellow bird; when sousing from on high, a vulture gobbled up the hawk, grasshopper, whangam, and all in a moment.

I had scarcely finished my fable, when the lawyer came to inform my friend, that his cause was put off till another term, that money was wanted to retain, and that all the world was of opinion, that the very next hearing would bring him off victorious. If so, then, cries my friend, I believe it will be my wisest way to continue the cause for another term, and in the mean time, my friend here and I will go and see Bedlam. Adieu.

LETTER XCVIII.

FROM THE SAME.

I LATELY received a visit from the little beau, who I found had assumed a new flow of spirits with a new suit of clothes. Our discourse happened to turn upon the different treatment of the fair sex here and in Asia, with the influence of beauty in refining our manners and improving our conversation.

I soon perceived he was strongly prejudiced in favour of the Asiatic method of treating the sex, and that it was impossible to persuade him, but that a man was happier who had four wives at his command, than he who had only one. "It is true," cries he, "your men of fashion in the East are "slaves, and under some terrors of having their "throats squeezed by a bow-string; but what then? "they can find ample consolation in a seraglio; "they make indeed an indifferent figure in conver- "sation abroad, but then they have a seraglio to con- "sole them at home. I am told they have no balls, "drums, nor operas, but then they have got a serag- "lio; they may be deprived of wine and French "cookery, but they have a seraglio; a seraglio, a se- "raglio, my dear creature, wipes off every inconve- "nience in the world.

"Besides, I am told, your Asiatic beauties are the "most convenient women alive, for they have no "souls; positively there is nothing in Nature I should "like so much as ladies without souls; soul here is "the utter ruin of half the sex. A girl of eighteen "shall have soul enough to spend an hundred pounds

" in the turning of a trump. Her mother shall have " soul enough to ride a sweepstake match at a horse- " race ; her maiden aunt shall have soul enough to " purchase the furniture of a whole toy shop, and " others shall have soul enough to behave as if they " had no souls at all."

With respect to the soul, interrupted I, the Asiatics are much kinder to the fair sex than you imagine; instead of one soul, Fohi the idol of China gives every woman three ; the Bramins give them fifteen ; and even Mahomet himself no where excludes the sex from Paradise. Abulfeda reports, that an old woman one day importuning him to know what she ought to do in order to gain Paradise ? *My good Lady*, answered the Prophet, *old women never get there ;* what, never get to Paradise, returned the matron, in a fury ! Never, says he, for they always grow young by the way.

No, Sir, continued I, the men of Asia behave with more deference to the sex than you seem to imagine. As you of Europe say grace, upon sitting down to dinner, so it is the custom in China to say grace, when a man goes to bed to his wife. *And may I die*, returned my companion, *but a very pretty ceremony ; for seriously, Sir, I see no reason why a man should not be as grateful in one situation as in the other. Upon honour, I always find myself much more disposed to gratitude, on the couch of a fine woman, than upon sitting down to a surloin of beef.*

Another ceremony, said I, resuming the conversation, in favour of the sex amongst us, is the bride's being allowed after marriage, *her three days of freedom.* During this interval a thousand extravagancies are practised by either sex. The lady is placed upon the nuptial bed, and numberless monkey tricks are played round to divert her. One gentleman smells

her perfumed handkerchief, another attempts to untie her garters, a third pulls off her shoe to play hunt the slipper, another pretends to be an ideot, and endeavours to raise a laugh by grimacing; in the mean time, the glass goes briskly about, till ladies, gentlemen, wife, husband, and all are mixed together in one inundation of arrack punch.

"Strike me dumb, deaf, and blind, cried my companion, but very pretty; there is some sense in your Chinese ladies' condescensions; but among us, you shall scarcely find one of the whole sex that shall hold her good humour for three days together. No later than yesterday I happened to say some civil things to a citizen's wife of my acquaintance, not because I loved, but because I had charity; and what do you think was the tender creature's reply! Only that she detested my pigtail wig, high heeled shoes, and sallow complexion. That is all. Nothing more! Yes, by the heavens, though she was more ugly than an unpainted actress, I found her more insolent than a thorough bred woman of quality."

He was proceeding in this wild manner, when his invective was interrupted by the man in black, who entered the apartment, introducing his niece, a young lady of exquisite beauty. Her very appearance was sufficient to silence the severest satyrist of the sex; easy without pride, and free without impudence, she seemed capable of supplying every sense with pleasure; her looks, her conversation were natural and unconstrained; she had neither been taught to languish nor ogle, to laugh without a jest, or sigh without sorrow. I found that she had just returned from abroad, and had been conversant in the manners of the world. Curiosity prompted me to ask several questions, but

she declined them all. I own I never found myself so strongly prejudiced in favour of apparent merit before; and could willingly have prolonged our conversation, but the company after some time withdrew. Just, however, before the little beau took his leave, he called me aside, and requested I would change him a twenty pound bill, which as I was incapable of doing, he was contented with borrowing half a crown. Adieu.

LETTER XCIX.

From Lien Chi Altangi to Hingpo, by the way of Moscow.

FEW virtues have been more praised by moralists than generosity; every practical treatise of Ethics tends to increase our sensibility of the distresses of others, and to relax the grasp of frugality. Philosophers that are poor praise it because they are gainers by its effects; and the opulent Seneca himself has written a treatise on benefits, though he was known to give nothing away.

But among the many who have enforced the duty of giving, I am surprised there are none to inculcate the ignominy of receiving, to show that by every favour we accept, we in some measure forfeit our native freedom, and that a state of continual dependence on the generosity of others is a life of gradual debasement.

Were men taught to despise the receiving obligations with the same force of reasoning and declama-

tion that they are instructed to confer them, we might then see every person in society filling up the requisite duties of his station with cheerful industry, neither relaxed by hope, nor sullen from disappointment.

Every favour a man receives in some measure sinks him below his dignity, and in proportion to the value of the benefit, or the frequency of its acceptance, he gives up so much of his natural independence. He therefore who thrives upon the unmerited bounty of another, if he has any sensibility, suffers the worst of servitude; the shackled slave may murmur without reproach, but the humble dependant is taxed with ingratitude upon every symptom of discontent; the one may rave round the walls of his cell, but the other lingers in all the silence of mental confinement. To increase his distress, every new obligation but adds to the former load which kept the vigorous mind from rising; till at last, elastic no longer, it shapes itself to constraint, and puts on habitual servility.

It is thus with the feeling mind; but there are some who, born without any share of sensibility, receive favour after favour, and still cringe for more, who accept the offer of generosity with as little reluctance as the wages of merit, and even make thanks for past benefits, an indirect petition for new; such I grant can suffer no debasement from dependence, since they were originally as vile as was possible to be; dependence degrades only the ingenuous, but leaves the sordid mind in pristine meanness. In this manner, therefore, long continued generosity is misplaced, or it is injurious; it either finds a man worthless, or it makes him so; and true it is, that the person who is contented to be *often* obliged, ought not to have been obliged at all.

Yet while I describe the meanness of a life of continued dependence, I would not be thought to include those natural or political subordinations which subsist in every society; for in such, though dependence is exacted from the inferior, yet the obligation on either side is mutual. The son must rely upon his parent for support, but the parent lies under the same obligations to give, that the other has to expect; the subordinate officer must receive the commands of his superior, but for this obedience the former has a right to demand an intercourse of favour; such is not the dependence I would depreciate, but that where every expected favour must be the result of mere benevolence in the giver, where the benefit can be kept without remorse, or transferred without injustice. The character of a legacy-hunter, for instance, is detestable in some countries, and despicable in all; this universal contempt of a man who infringes upon none of the laws of society, some moralists have arraigned as a popular and unjust prejudice; never considering the necessary degradations a wretch must undergo, who previously expects to grow rich by benefits without having either natural or social claims to enforce his petitions.

But this intercourse of benefaction and acknowledgment, is often injurious even to the giver as well as the receiver; a man can gain but little knowledge of himself, or of the world, amidst a circle of those whom hope or gratitude has gathered round him; their unceasing humiliations must necessarily increase his comparative magnitude, for all men measure their own abilities by those of their company; thus being taught to over-rate his merit, he in reality lessens it; increasing in confidence, but not in power, his professions end in empty boast, his undertakings in shameful disappointment.

It is perhaps one of the severest misfortunes of the great, that they are, in general, obliged to live among men whose real virtue is lessened by dependence, and whose minds are enslaved by obligation. The humble companion may have at first accepted patronage with generous views, but soon he feels the mortifying influence of conscious inferiority, by degrees sinks into a flatterer, and from flattery at last degenerates into stupid veneration. To remedy this the great often dismiss their old dependents, and take new. Such changes are falsely imputed to levity, falsehood, or caprice in the patron, since they may be more justly ascribed to the client's gradual deterioration.

No, my son, a life of independence is generally a life of virtue. It is that which fits the soul for every generous flight of humanity, freedom and friendship. To give should be our pleasure, but to receive our shame; serenity, health, and affluence attend the desire of rising by labour; misery, repentance, and disrespect that of succeeding by extorted benevolence; the man who can thank himself alone for the happiness he enjoys is truly blest; and lovely, far more lovely the sturdy gloom of laborious indigence, than the fawning simper of thriving adulation.

Adieu.

LETTER C.

From Lien Chi Altangi to Fum Hoam, first President of the Ceremonial Academy at Pekin, in China.

In every society some men are born to teach, and others to receive instruction; some to work, and others to enjoy in idleness the fruits of their indus-

try; some to govern, and others to obey. Every people, how free soever, must be contented to give up part of their liberty and judgment to those who govern, in exchange for their hopes of security; and the motives which first influenced their choice in the election of their governors should ever be weighed against the succeeding apparent inconsistencies of their conduct. All cannot be rulers, and men are generally best governed by a few. In making way through the intricacies of business, the smallest obstacles are apt to retard the execution of what is to be planned by a multiplicity of counsels; the judgment of one alone being always fittest for winding through the labyrinths of intrigue, and the obstructions of disappointment. A serpent, which, as the fable observes, is furnished with one head and many tails, is much more capable of subsistence and expedition, than another, which is furnished with but one tail and many heads.

Obvious as these truths are, the people of this country seem insensible of their force. Not satisfied with the advantages of internal peace and opulence, they still murmur at their governors, and interfere in the execution of their designs; as if they wanted to be something more than happy. But as the Europeans instruct by argument, and the Asiatics mostly by narration, were I to address them, I should convey my sentiments in the following story.

Takupi had long been Prime Minister of Tipartala, a fertile country that stretches along the Western confines of China. During his administration, whatever advantages could be derived from arts, learning and commerce, were seen to bless the people; nor were the necessary precautions of providing for the security of the state forgotten. It often happens, however, that when men are possessed of all they want,

they then begin to find torment from imaginary afflictions, and lessen their present enjoyments, by foreboding that those enjoyments are to have an end. The people now therefore endeavoured to find out grievances; and after some search, actually began to think themselves aggrieved. A petition against the enormities of Takupi was carried to the throne in due form; and the Queen who governed the country, willing to satisfy her subjects, appointed a day, in which his accusers should be heard, and the minister should stand upon his defence.

The day being arrived, and the minister brought before the tribunal, a carrier, who supplied the city with fish, appeared among the number of his accusers. He exclaimed, that it was the custom, time immemorial, for carriers to bring their fish upon an horse in a hamper; which being placed on one side, and balanced by a stone on the other, was thus conveyed with ease and safety; but that the prisoner, moved either by a spirit of innovation, or perhaps bribed by the hamper-makers, had obliged all carriers to use the stone no longer, but balance one hamper with another; an order entirely repugnant to the customs of all antiquity, and those of the kingdom of Tipartala in particular.

The carrier finished: and the whole court shook their heads at the innovating minister: when a second witness appeared. He was inspector of the city buildings, and accused the disgraced favourite of having given orders for the demolition of an ancient ruin, which obstructed the passage through one of the principal streets. He observed that such buildings were noble monuments of barbarous antiquity; contributed finely to show how little their ancestors understood of architecture; and for that reason such

monuments should be held sacred, and suffered gradually to decay.

The last witness now appeared. This was a widow, who had laudably attempted to burn herself upon her husband's funeral pile. But the innovating minister had prevented the execution of her design, and was insensible to her tears, protestations, and intreaties.

The Queen could have pardoned the two former offences; but this last was considered as so gross an injury to the sex, and so directly contrary to all the customs of antiquity, that it called for immediate justice. "What," cried the Queen, "not suffer a woman to burn herself when she thinks proper? The sex are to be very prettily tutored, no doubt, if they must be restrained from entertaining their female friends now and then with a fried wife, or roasted acquaintance. I sentence the criminal to be banished my presence for ever for his injurious treatment of the sex."

Takupi had been hitherto silent, and spoke only to show the sincerity of his resignation. "Great Queen," cried he, "I acknowledge my crime; and since I am to be banished, I beg it may be to some ruined town, or desolate village in the country I have governed. I shall find some pleasure in improving the soil, and bringing back a spirit of industry among the inhabitants." His request appearing reasonable, it was immediately complied with; and a courtier had orders to fix upon a place of banishment, answering the minister's description. After some months search, however, the inquiry proved fruitless; neither a desolate village, nor a ruined town was found in the kingdom. *Alas!* said Takupi then to the Queen, *How can that country be ill-governed which has neither a desolate village, nor a ruined town*

in it? The Queen perceived the justice of his expostulation, and the minister was received into more than former favours.

LETTER CI.

FROM THE SAME.

THE ladies here are by no means such ardent gamesters as the women of Asia. In this respect I must do the English justice; for I love to praise where applause is justly merited. Nothing more common in China, than to see two women of fashion continue gaming till one has won all the other's clothes, and stripped her quite naked; the winner thus marching off in a double suit of finery, and the loser shrinking behind in the primitive simplicity of Nature.

No doubt, you remember when *Shang*, our maiden aunt, played with a sharper. First her money went; then her trinkets were produced; her clothes followed piece by piece soon after; when she had thus played herself quite naked, being a woman of spirit, and willing to pursue *her own*, she staked her teeth: Fortune was against her even here, and her teeth followed her clothes; at last she played for her left eye, and, oh, hard fate, this too she lost: however, she had the consolation of biting the sharper; for he never perceived that it was made of glass till it became his own.

How happy, my friend, are the English ladies, who never rise to such an inordinance of passion! Though the sex here are generally fond of games of chance,

and are taught to manage games of skill from their infancy, yet they never pursue ill-fortune with such amazing intrepidity. Indeed I may entirely acquit them of ever playing—I mean of playing for their eyes or their teeth.

It is true, they often stake their fortune, their beauty, health, and reputations at a gaming-table. It even sometimes happens, that they play their husbands into a gaol; yet still they preserve a decorum unknown to our wives and daughters of China. I have been present at a route in this country, where a woman of fashion, after losing her money, has sat writhing in all the agonies of bad luck; and yet, after all, never once attempted to strip a single petticoat, or cover the board, as her last stake, with her head-clothes.

However, though I praise their moderation at play, I must not conceal their assiduity. In China our women, except upon some great days, are never permitted to finger a dice-box; but here every day seems to be a festival; and night itself, which gives others rest, only serves to increase the female gamester's industry. I have been told of an old lady in the country, who being given over by the physicians, played with the curate of her parish to pass the time away: having won all his money, she next proposed playing for her funeral charges; the proposal was accepted; but unfortunately the lady expired just as she had taken in her game.

There are some passions, which, though differently pursued, are attended with equal consequences in every country: here they game with more perseverance, there with greater fury; here they strip their families, there they strip themselves naked. A lady in China, who indulges a passion for gaming, often becomes a drunkard; and by flourishing a dice-box in

one hand, she generally comes to brandish a dram cup in the other. Far be it from me to say there are any who drink drams in England; but it is natural to suppose, that when a lady has lost every thing else but her honour, she will be apt to toss that into the bargain; and, grown insensible to nicer feelings, behave like the Spaniard, who, when all his money was gone, endeavoured to borrow more, by offering to pawn his whisker. Adieu.

LETTER CII.

*From Lien Chi Altangi to * * * Merchant in Amsterdam.*

I HAVE just received a letter from my son, in which he informs me of the fruitlessness of his endeavours to recover the lady with whom he fled from Persia. He strives to cover under the appearance of fortitude a heart torn with anxiety and disappointment. I have offered little consolation; since that but too frequently feeds the sorrow which it pretends to deplore, and strengthens the impression, which nothing but the external rubs of time and accident can thoroughly efface.

He informs me of his intentions of quitting Moscow the first opportunity, and travelling by land to Amsterdam. I must therefore, upon his arrival, intreat the continuance of your friendship; and beg of you to provide him with proper directions for finding me in London. You can scarcely be sensible of the joy I expect upon seeing him once more:

the ties between the father and the son among us of China are much more closely drawn than with you of Europe.

The remittances sent me from Argun to Moscow came in safety. I cannot sufficiently admire that spirit of honesty, which prevails through the whole country of Siberia: perhaps the savages of that desolate region are the only untutored people of the globe that cultivate the moral virtues, even without knowing that their actions merit praise. I have been told surprising things of their goodness, benevolence, and generosity; and the uninterrupted commerce between China and Russia serves as a collateral confirmation.

Let us, says the Chinese law-giver, *admire the rude virtues of the ignorant, but rather imitate the delicate morals of the polite.* In the country where I reside, though honesty and benevolence be not so congenial; yet art supplies the place of Nature. Though here every vice is carried to excess; yet every virtue is practised also with unexampled superiority. A city like this is the soil for great virtues and great vices; the villain can soon improve here in the deepest mysteries of deceiving; and the practical philosopher can every day meet new incitements to mend his honest intentions. There are no pleasures, sensual or sentimental, which this city does not produce; yet I know not how, I could not be content to reside here for life. There is something so seducing in that spot in which we first had existence, that nothing but it can please; whatever vicissitudes we experience in life, however we toil, or wheresoever we wander, our fatigued wishes still recur to home for tranquillity; we long to die in that spot which gave us birth, and in that pleasing expectation opiate every calamity.

You now therefore perceive that I have some in-

tentions of leaving this country; and yet my designed departure fills me with reluctance and regret. Though the friendships of travellers are generally more transient than vernal snows, still I feel an uneasiness at breaking the connexions I have formed since my arrival; particularly I shall have no small pain in leaving my usual companion, guide, and instructor.

I shall wait for the arrival of my son before I set out. He shall be my companion in every intended journey for the future; in his company I can support the fatigues of the way with redoubled ardour, pleased at once with conveying instruction, and exacting obedience. Adieu.

LETTER CIII.

From Lien Chi Altangi to Fum Hoam, first President of the Ceremonial Academy at Pekin, in China.

OUR scholars in China have a most profound veneration for forms. A first-rate beauty never studied the decorums of dress with more assiduity; they may properly enough be said to be clothed with wisdom from head to foot; they have their philosophical caps and philosophical whiskers, their philosophical slippers and philosophical fans; there is even a philosophical standard for measuring the nails; and yet with all this seeming wisdom, they are often found to be mere empty pretenders.

A philosophical beau is not so frequent in Europe; yet I am told that such characters are found here. I mean such as punctually support all the decorums of

learning, without being really very profound, or naturally possessed of a fine understanding; who labour hard to obtain the titular honours attending literary merit, who flatter others, in order to be flattered in turn; and only study to be thought students.

A character of this kind generally receives company in his study, in all the pensive formality of slippers, night-gown, and easy chair. The table is covered with a large book which is alway kept open, and never read; his solitary hours being dedicated to dozing, mending pens, feeling his pulse, peeping through the microscope, and sometimes reading amusing books, which he condemns in company. His library is preserved with the most religious neatness; and is generally a repository of scarce books, which bear an high price, because too dull or useless to become common by the ordinary methods of publication.

Such men are generally candidates for admittance into literary clubs, academies, and institutions, where they regularly meet to give and receive a little instruction and a great deal of praise. In conversation they never betray ignorance, because they never seem to receive information. Offer a new observation, they have heard it before; pinch them in an argument, and they reply with a sneer.

Yet how trifling soever these little arts may appear, they answer one valuable purpose, of gaining the practisers the esteem they wish for. The bounds of a man's knowledge are easily concealed, if he has but prudence; but all can readily see and admire a gilt library, a set of long nails, a silver standish, or a well-combed whisker, who are incapable of distinguishing a dunce.

When Father Matthew, the first European missioner, entered China, the court was informed that he possessed great skill in astronomy; he was there-

fore sent for, and examined. The established astronomers of state undertook this task; and made their report to the emperor that his skill was but very superficial, and no way comparable to their own. The missioner, however, appealed from their judgment to experience, and challenged them to calculate an eclipse of the moon that was to happen a few nights following. "What," said some, "shall a Barbarian "without nails pretend to vie with men in astronomy, "who have made it the study of their lives, with men "who know half the knowable characters of words, "who wear scientifical caps and slippers, and who "have gone through every literary degree with ap- "plause?" They accepted the challenge, confident of success The eclipse began; the Chinese produced a most splendid apparatus, and were fifteen minutes wrong; the missioner with a single instrument was exact to a second. This was convincing; but the court astronomers were not to be convinced; instead of acknowledging their error, they assured the emperor that their calculations were certainly exact, but that the stranger without nails had actually bewitched the moon. *Well then*, cries the good emperor, smiling at their ignorance, *you shall still continue to be servants of the moon; but I constitute this man her controller.*

China is thus replete with men, whose only pretensions to knowledge arise from external circumstances; and in Europe every country abounds with them in proportion to its ignorance. Spain and Flanders, who are behind the rest of Europe in learning at least three centuries, have twenty literary titles and marks of distinction unknown in France or England: they have their *Clarissimi* and *Preclarissimi*, their *Accuratissimi* and *Minutissimi*; a round cap entitles one student to argue, and a square cap permits another to

teach; while a cap with a tassel almost sanctifies the head it happens to cover. But where true knowledge is cultivated, these formalities begin to disappear; the ermined cowl, the solemn beard, and sweeping train, are laid aside; philosophers dress and talk and think like other men; and lamb-skin dressers and cap-makers, and tail-carriers, now deplore a literary.

For my own part, my friend, I have seen enough of presuming ignorance, never to venerate wisdom but where it actually appears. I have received literary titles and distinctions myself; and, by the quantity of my own wisdom, know how very little wisdom they can confer. Adieu.

LETTER CIV.

From Lien Chi Altangi to Fum Hoam, first President of the Ceremonial Academy at Pekin, in China.

THE time for the young King's coronation approaches; the great and the little world look forward with impatience. A knight from the country who has brought up his family to see and be seen on this occasion, has taken all the lower part of the house where I lodge. His wife is laying in a large quantity of silks, which the mercer tells her are to be fashionable next season; and Miss, her daughter, has actually had her ears bored previously to the ceremony. In all this bustle of preparation I am considered as mere lumber, and have been shoved up two stories higher, to make room for others my landlady seems perfectly convinced are my betters; but whom before me she is contented with only calling very good company.

The little beau, who has now forced himself into my intimacy, was yesterday giving me a minute detail of the intended procession. All men are eloquent upon their favourite topic; and this seemed peculiarly adapted to the size and turn of his understanding. His whole mind was blazoned over with a variety of glittering images; coronets, escutcheons, lace, fringe, tassels, stones, bugles, and spun glass. "Here," cried he, "Garter is to walk; and there Rouge Dragon "marches with the escutcheons on his back. Here "Clarencieux moves forward; and there Blue Mantle "disdains to be left behind. Here the aldermen "march two and two; and there the undaunted champion of England, no way terrified at the very numerous appearance of gentlemen and ladies, rides "forward in complete armour, and with an intrepid "air throws down his glove. Ah," continued he, "should any one be so hardy as to take up that fatal "glove, and so accept the challenge, we should see "fine sport; the champion would show him no mercy; he would soon teach him all his passes with a "witness. However, I am afraid we shall have none "willing to try it with him upon the approaching "occasion for two reasons: first, because his antagonist would stand a chance of being killed in "the single combat; and secondly, because if he "escapes the champion's arm, he would certainly "be hanged for treason. No, no, I fancy, none "will be so hardy as to dispute it with a champion "like him inured to arms; and we shall probably "see him prancing unmolested away, holding his "bridle thus in one hand, and brandishing his dram "cup in the other."

Some men have a manner of describing, which only wraps the subject in more than former obscurity; thus was I unable, with all my companion's volubility,

to form a distinct idea of the intended procession. I was certain that the inauguration of a king should be conducted with solemnity and religious awe; and I could not be persuaded that there was much solemnity in this description. If this be true, cried I to myself, the people of Europe surely have a strange manner of mixing solemn and fantastic images together; pictures at once replete with burlesque and the sublime. At a time when the king enters into the most solemn compact with his people, nothing surely should be admitted to diminish from the real majesty of the ceremony. A ludicrous image brought in at such a time throws an air of ridicule upon the whole. It some way resembles a picture I have seen, designed by Albert Durer, where, amidst all the solemnity of that awful scene, a Deity judging, and a trembling world awaiting the decree, he has introduced a merry mortal trundling his scolding wife to hell in a wheelbarrow.

My companion, who mistook my silence, during this interval of reflection, for the rapture of astonishment, proceeded to describe those frivolous parts of the show, that mostly struck his imagination; and to assure me that if I staid in this country some months longer I should see fine things. "For my own part," continued he, "I know already of fifteen suits of "clothes, that would stand on one end with gold lace, "all designed to be first shown there; and as for "diamonds, rubies, emeralds and pearls, we shall see "them, as thick as brass nails in a sedan chair. And "then we are all to walk so majestically thus; this "foot always behind the foot before. The ladies are "to fling nosegays; the court poets to scatter verses; "the spectators are to be all in full dress; Mrs. Tibbs "in a new sacque, ruffles, and frenched hair; look "where you will, one thing finer than another; Mrs.

" Tibbs curtsies to the Dutchess; her Grace returns " the compliment with a bow. Largess, cries the " Herald. Make room, cries the Gentleman Usher. " Knock him down, cries the guard. Ah!" continued he, amazed at his own description, " what an " astonishing scene of grandeur can art produce " from the smallest circumstance, when it thus ac- " tually turns to wonder one man putting on another " man's hat."

I now found his mind was entirely set upon the fopperies of the pageant, and quite regardless of the real meaning of such costly preparations. *Pageants*, says Bacon, *are pretty things; but we should rather study to make them elegant than expensive.* Processions, cavalcades, and all that fund of gay frippery, furnished out by tailors, barbers, and tirewomen, mechanically influence the mind into veneration: an emperor in his night-cap would not meet with half the respect of an emperor with a glittering crown. Politics resemble religion: attempting to divest either of ceremony is the most certain method of bringing either into contempt. The weak must have their inducements to admiration as well as the wise; and it is the business of a sensible government, to impress all ranks with a sense of subordination, whether this be effected by a diamond buckle or a virtuous edict, a sumptuary law or a glass necklace.

This interval of reflection only gave my companion spirits to begin his description afresh; and as a greater inducement to raise my curiosity, he informed me of the vast sums that were given by the spectators for places. " That the ceremony must be fine," cries he " is very evident from the fine price that is paid " for seeing it. Several ladies have assured me, they " would willingly part with one eye, rather than be " prevented from looking on with the other. Come,

" come," continues he, " I have a friend who for my " sake will supply us with places at the most reason- " able rates; I will take care you shall not be impos- " ed upon; and he will inform you of the use, finery, " rapture, splendour, and enchantment of the whole " ceremony better than I."

Follies often repeated lose their absurdity, and assume the appearance of reason: his arguments were so often and so strongly enforced, that I had actually some thoughts of becoming a spectator. We accordingly went together to bespeak a place; but guess my surprise, when the man demanded a purse of gold for a single seat: I could hardly believe him serious upon making the demand. " Prithee, friend," cried I, " after I have paid twenty pounds for sitting " here an hour or two, can I bring a part of the coro- " nation back?" *No, Sir.* " How long can I live upon " it after I have come away?" *Not long, Sir.* " Can " a coronation clothe, feed, or fatten me?" *Sir*, replied the man, *you seem to be under a mistake; all that you can bring away is the pleasure of having it to say, that you saw the coronation.* " Blast me," cries Tibbs, " if that be all, there is no need of paying for that, " since I am resolved to have that pleasure, whether " I am there or no!"

I am conscious my friend, that this is but a very confused description of the intended ceremony. You may object, that I neither settle rank, precedency, nor place; that I seem ignorant whether Gules walks before or behind Garter; that I have neither mentioned the dimensions of a lord's cap, nor measured the length of a lady's tail. I know your delight is in minute description; and this I am unhappily disqualified from furnishing; yet upon the whole I fancy it will be no way comparable to the magnificence of our late emperor Whangti's procession, when he was

married to the moon, at which Fum Hoam himself presided in person. Adieu.

LETTER CV.

TO THE SAME.

IT was formerly the custom here, when men of distinction died, for their surviving acquaintance to throw each a slight present into the grave. Several things of little value were made use of for that purpose; perfumes, reliques, spices, bitter herbs, chamomile, wormwood, and verses. This custom however is almost discontinued; and nothing but verses alone are now lavished on such occasions; an oblation which they suppose may be interred with the dead, without any injury to the living.

Upon the death of the great, therefore, the poets and undertakers are sure of employment. While one provides the long cloak, black staff, and mourning coach, the other produces the pastoral or elegy, the monody or apotheosis. The nobility need be under no apprehensions, but die as fast as they think proper, the poet and undertaker are ready to supply them; these can find metaphorical tears and family escutcheons at half an hour's warning; and when the one has soberly laid the body in the grave, the other is ready to fix it figuratively among the stars.

There are several ways of being poetically sorry on such occasions. The bard is now some pensive youth of science, who sits deploring among the tombs; again he is Thyrsis complaining in a circle of harmless sheep. Now Britannia sits upon her own shore, and gives a loose to maternal tenderness; at another time, Parnassus, even the mountain Parnas-

sus, gives way to sorrow, and is bathed in tears of distress.

But the most usual manner is this: Damon meets Manalcas, who has got a most gloomy countenance. The shepherd asks his friend, whence that look of distress? to which the other replies that Pollio is no more. If that be the case then, cries Damon, let us retire to yonder bower at some distance off, where the cypress and the jessamine add fragrance to the breeze; and let us weep alternately for Pollio, the friend of shepherds, and the patron of every muse. Ah, returns his fellow shepherd, what think you rather of that grotto by the fountain side; the murmuring stream will help to assist our complaints, and a nightingale on a neighbouring tree will join her voice to the concert. When the place is thus settled, they begin: the brook stands still to hear their lamentations; the cows forget to graze; and the very tygers start from the forest with sympathetic concern. By the tombs of our ancestors, my dear Fum, I am quite unaffected in all this distress: the whole is liquid laudanum to my spirits; and a tyger of common sensibility has twenty times more tenderness than I.

But though I could never weep with the complaining shepherd, yet I am sometimes induced to pity the poet, whose trade is thus to make demigods and heroes for a dinner. There is not in nature a more dismal figure than a man who sits down to premeditated flattery; every stanza he writes tacitly reproaches the meanness of his occupation, till at last his stupidity becomes more stupid, and his dulness more diminutive.

I am amazed therefore that none have yet found out the secret of flattering the worthless, and yet of preserving a safe conscience. I have often wished for some method by which a man might do himself and

his deceased patron justice, without being under the hateful reproach of self-conviction. After long lucubration, I have hit upon such an expedient; and send you the specimen of a poem upon the decease of a great man, in which the flattery is perfectly fine, and yet the poet perfectly innocent.

On the Death of the Right Honourable * * *.

Ye muses, pour the pitying tear
For Pollio snatch'd away:
O, had he liv'd another year!
——*He had not died to-day.*

O, were he born to bless mankind
In virtuous times of yore,
Heroes themselves had fallen behind!
——*When e'er he went before.*

How sad the groves and plains appear,
And sympathetic sheep;
Ev'n pitying hills would drop a tear!
——*If hills could learn to weep.*

His bounty in exalted strain,
Each bard might well display:
Since none implor'd relief in vain!
——*That went reliev'd away.*

And hark! I hear the tuneful throng
His obsequies forbid;
He still shall live, shall live as long
——*As ever dead man did.*

LETTER CVI.

TO THE SAME.

IT is the most usual method in every report, first to examine its probability, and then act as the conjuncture may require. The English, however, exert a different spirit in such circumstances; they first act, and when too late begin to examine. From a knowledge of this disposition, there are several here who make it their business to frame new reports at every convenient interval, all tending to denounce ruin both on their contemporaries and their posterity. This denunciation is eagerly caught up by the public; away they fling to propagate the distress; sell out at one place, buy in at another, grumble at their governors, shout in mobs, and when they have thus for some time behaved like fools, sit down coolly to argue and talk wisdom, to puzzle each other with syllogism, and prepare for the next report that prevails, which is always attended with the same success.

Thus are they ever rising above one report only to sink into another. They resemble a dog in a well pawing to get free. When he has raised his upper parts above water, and every spectator imagines him disengaged, his lower parts drag him down again and sink him to the nose; he makes new efforts to emerge, and every effort increasing his weakness, only tends sink him the deeper.

There are some here, who I am told, make a tolerable subsistence by the credulity of their countrymen: as they find the public fond of blood, wounds and death, they contrive political ruins suited to every

month in the year: this month the people are to be eaten up by the French in flat-bottomed boats; the next by the soldiers, designed to beat the French back; now the people are going to jump down the gulph of luxury; and now nothing but an herring subscription can fish them up again. Time passes on; the report proves false; new circumstances produce new changes, but the people never change, they are persevering in folly.

In other countries those boding politicians would be left to fret over their own schemes alone, and grow splenetic without hopes of infecting others: but England seems to be the very region where spleen delights to dwell; a man not only can give an unbounded scope to the disorder in himself, but may if he pleases, propagate it over the whole kingdom, with a certainty of success. He has only to cry out, that the government, the government is all wrong, that their schemes are leading to ruin, that Britons are now no more; every good member of the commonwealth thinks it his duty, in such a case, to deplore the universal decadence with sympathetic sorrow, and by fancying the constitution in a decay, absolutely to impair its vigour.

This people would laugh at my simplicity, should I advise them to be less sanguine in harbouring gloomy predictions, and examine coolly before they attempted to complain. I have just heard a story, which though transacted in a private family, serves very well to describe the behaviour of the whole nation, in cases of threatened calamity. As there are public, so there are private incendiaries here. One of the last, either for the amusement of his friends, or to divert a fit of the spleen, lately sent a threatening letter to a worthy family in my neighbourhood, to this effect.

"SIR, Knowing you to be very rich, and finding "myself to be very poor, I think proper to inform "you, that I have learned the secret of poisoning "man, woman, and child, without danger of detec- "tion. Do not be uneasy, Sir, you may take your "choice of being poisoned in a fortnight, or poisoned "in a month, or poisoned in six weeks; you shall "have full time to settle all your affairs. Though I "am poor, I love to do things like a gentleman. But, "Sir, you must die; I have determined it within my "own breast that you must die. Blood, Sir, blood "is my trade; so I could wish you would this day "six weeks take leave of your friends, wife, and "family, for I cannot possibly allow you longer "time. To convince you more certainly of the "power of my art, by which you may know I speak "truth, take this letter; when you have read it, tear "off the seal, fold it up, and give it to your favourite "Dutch mastiff that sits by the fire; he will swallow "it, Sir, like a buttered toast; in three hours four "minutes after he has taken it, he will attempt to "bite off his own tongue, and half an hour after burst "asunder in twenty pieces. Blood, blood, blood; so "no more at present from Sir, your most obedient, most "devoted humble servant to command till death."

You may easily imagine the consternation into which this letter threw the whole good-natured family. The poor man, to whom it was addressed, was the more surprised, as not knowing how he could merit such inveterate malice. All the friends of the family were convened; it was universally agreed, that it was a most terrible affair, and that the government should be solicited to offer a reward and a pardon: a fellow of this kind would go on poisoning family after family; and it was impossible to say where the destruction would end. In pursuance of these determi-

nations the government was applied to; strict search was made after the incendiary, but all in vain. At last, therefore, they recollected that the experiment was not yet tried upon the dog; the Dutch mastiff was brought up, and placed in the midst of the friends and relations, the seal was torn off, the pacquet folded up with care, and soon they found, to the great surprise of all—that the dog would not eat the letter.

Adieu.

LETTER CVII.

TO THE SAME.

I HAVE frequently been amazed at the ignorance of almost all the European travellers, who have penetrated any considerable way Eastward into Asia. They have been influenced either by motives of commerce or piety, and their accounts are such as might reasonably be expected from men of very narrow or very prejudiced education, the dictates of superstition or the result of ignorance. Is it not surprising, that in such a variety of adventurers not one single philosopher should be found? for as to the travels of Gemelli, the learned are long agreed that the whole is but an imposture.

There is scarcely any country how rude or uncultivated soever, where the inhabitants are not possessed of some peculiar secrets either in Nature or art, which might be transplanted with success; in Siberian Tartary, for instance, the natives extract a strong spirit from milk, which is a secret probably unknown

to the chymists of Europe. In the most savage parts of India they are possessed of the secret of dying vegetable substances scarlet; and of refining lead into a metal, which for hardness and colour is little inferior to silver; not one of which secrets but would in Europe make a man's fortune. The power of the Asiatics in producing winds, or bringing down rain, the Europeans are apt to treat as fabulous, because they have no instances of the like nature among themselves; but they would have treated the secrets of gunpowder, and the mariner's compass in the same manner, had they been told the Chinese used such arts before the invention was common with themselves at home.

Of all the English philosophers I most reverence *Bacon*, that great and hardy genius; he it is who allows of secrets yet unknown; who, undaunted by the seeming difficulties that oppose, prompts human curiosity to examine every part of Nature, and even exhorts man to try whether he cannot subject the tempest, the thunder, and even earthquakes to human control! O did a man of his daring spirit, of his genius, penetration and learning, travel to those countries which have been visited only by the superstitious and mercenary, what might not mankind expect: how would he enlighten the regions to which he travelled! And what a variety of knowledge and useful improvement would he not bring back in exchange!

There is probably no country so barbarous, that would not disclose all it knew, if it received from the traveller equivalent information; and I am apt to think, that a person who was ready to give more knowledge than he received, would be welcome wherever he came. All his care in travelling should only be to suit his intellectual banquet to the people

with whom he conversed; he should not attempt to teach the unlettered Tartar astronomy, nor yet instruct the polite Chinese in the ruder arts of subsistence: he should endeavour to improve the barbarian in the secrets of living comfortably; and the inhabitant of a more refined country in the speculative pleasures of science. How much more nobly would a philosopher thus employed spend his time, than by sitting at home earnestly intent upon adding one star more to his catalogue; or one monster more to his collection; or still, if possible, more triflingly sedulous in the incatenation of fleas, or the sculpture of a cherry-stone!

I never consider this subject, without being surprised that none of those societies so laudably established in England for the promotion of arts and learning, have ever thought of sending one of their members into the most eastern parts of Asia, to make what discoveries he was able. To be convinced of the utility of such an undertaking, let them but read the relations of their own travellers. It will be there found, that they are as often deceived themselves, as they attempt to deceive others. The merchant tells us perhaps the price of different commodities, the methods of baling them up, and the properest manner for an European to preserve his health in the country. The missioner, on the other hand, informs us, with what pleasure the country to which he was sent embraced Christianity, and the numbers he converted; what methods he took to keep Lent in a region where there was no fish, or the shifts he made to celebrate the rites of his religion, in places where there was neither bread nor wine! such accounts, with the usual appendage of marriage and funerals, inscriptions, rivers, and mountains, make up the whole of an European traveller's diary; but as to all the secrets of which the inhabitants are posses-

sed, those are universally attributed to magic; and when the traveller can give no other account of the wonders he sees performed, very contentedly ascribes them to the power of the devil.

It was an usual observation of *Boyle*, the English chymist, that if every artist would but discover what new observations occurred to him in the exercise of his trade, philosophy would thence gain innumerable improvements. It may be observed with still greater justice, that if the useful knowledge of every country, howsoever barbarous, was gleaned by a judicious observer, the advantages would be inestimable. Are there not even in Europe many useful inventions known or practised but in one place? The instrument, as an example, for cutting down corn in Germany is much more handy and expeditious, in my opinion, than the sickle used in England. The cheap and expeditious manner of making vinegar without previous fermentation is known only in a part of France. If such discoveries, therefore, remain still to be known at home; what funds of knowledge might not be collected in countries yet unexplored, or only passed through by ignorant travellers in hasty caravans!

The caution with which foreigners are received in Asia may be alleged as an objection to such a design. But how ready have several European merchants found admission into regions the most suspecting, under the character of *Sanjapins*, or northern pilgrims; to such not even China itself denies access.

To send out a traveller, properly qualified for these purposes, might be an object of national concern; it would in some measure repair the breaches made by ambition; and might show that there were still some who boasted a greater name than that of patriots, who professed themselves lovers of men. The only difficulty would remain in choosing a proper person, for

so arduous an enterprise. He should be a man of a philosophical turn, one apt to deduce consequences of general utility from particular occurrences, neither swollen with pride, nor hardened by prejudice, neither wedded to one particular system, nor instructed only in one particular science; neither wholly a botanist, nor quite an antiquarian; his mind should be tinctured with miscellaneous knowledge, and his manners humanized by an intercourse with men. He should be in some measure an enthusiast in the design; fond of travelling from a rapid imagination and an innate love of change; furnished with a body capable of sustaining every fatigue, and an heart not easily terrified at danger.

Adieu.

LETTER CVIII.

FROM THE SAME.

ONE of the principal tasks I had proposed to myself on my arrival here, was to become acquainted with the names and characters of those now living, who as scholars or wits, had acquired the greatest share of reputation. In order to succeed in this design, I fancied the surest method would be to begin my inquiry among the ignorant, judging that his fame would be greatest, which was loud enough to be heard by the vulgar. Thus predisposed I began the search, but only went in quest of disappointment and perplexity. I found every district had a peculiar fa-

mous man of its own. Here the story-telling shoemaker had engrossed the admiration on one side of the street, while the bellman, who excelleth at a catch, was in quiet possession of the other. At one end of a lane the sexton was regarded as the greatest man alive, but I had not travelled half its length, till I found an enthusiast teacher had divided his reputation. My landlady perceiving my design, was kind enough to offer me her advice in this affair. It was true, she observed, that she was no judge, but she knew what pleased herself, and if I would rest upon her judgment, I should set down Tom Collins as the most ingenious man in the world, for Tom was able to take off all mankind, and imitate besides a sow and pigs to perfection.

I now perceived, that taking my standard of reputation among the vulgar, would swell my catalogue of great names above the size of a Court Calendar; I therefore discontinued this method of pursuit, and resolved to prosecute my inquiry in that usual residence of fame, a bookseller's shop. In consequence of this I entreated the bookseller to let me know who were they who now made the greatest figure either in morals, wit, or learning. Without giving me a direct answer, he pulled a pamphlet from the shelf, *The Young Attorney's Guide;* there, Sir, cries he, there is a touch for you, fifteen hundred of these moved off in a day: I take the author of this pamphlet either for title, preface, plan, body, or index, to be the completest hand in England. I found it was vain to prosecute my inquiry, where my informer appeared so incompetent a judge of merit, so paying for the *Young Attorney's Guide*, which good manners obliged me to buy, I walked off.

My pursuit after famous men now brought me into a print shop. Here, thought I, the painter only re-

flects the public voice. As every man who deserved it, had formerly his statue placed up in the Roman forum, so here probably the pictures of none but such as merit a place in our affections are held up for public sale. But guess my surprise when I came to examine this depository of noted faces; all distinctions were levelled here, as in the grave, and I could not but regard it as the catacomb of real merit. The brick-dust man took up as much room as the truncheoned hero, and the judge was elbowed by the thief-taker; quacks, pimps, and buffoons, increased the group, and noted stallions only made room for more noted whores. I had read the works of some of the moderns previously to my coming to England, with delight and approbation, but I found their faces had no place here, the walls were covered with the names of authors I had never known, or had endeavoured to forget; with the little self advertising things of a day, who had forced themselves into fashion, but not into fame; I could read at the bottom of some pictures the names of * *, and * * *, and * * * *, all equally candidates for the vulgar shout, and foremost to propagate their unblushing faces upon brass. My uneasiness therefore at not finding my few favourite names among the number, was now changed into congratulation; I could not avoid reflecting on the fine observation of Tacitus, on a similar occasion. In this cavalcade of flattery, cries the historian, neither the pictures of Brutus, Cassius, nor Cato, were to be seen, *eo clariores quia imagines eorum non deferebantur*, their absence being the strongest proof of their merit.

It is in vain, cried I, to seek for true greatness among these monuments of the unburied dead; let me go among the tombs of those who are confessedly famous, and see if any have been lately deposited there, who deserve the attention of posterity, and

whose names may be transmitted to my distant friend, as an honour to the present age. Determined in my pursuit, I paid a second visit to Westminster Abbey. There I found several new monuments erected to the memory of several great men; the names of the great men I absolutely forget, but I well remember that Roubillac was the statuary who carved them. I could not help smiling at two modern epitaphs in particular; one of which praised the deceased for being *ortus ex antiquâ stirpe;* the other commended the dead, because *hanc ædem suis sumptibus reædificavit:* the greatest merit of one consisted in his being descended from an illustrious house; the chief distinction of the other that he had propped up an old house that was falling. Alas! alas! cried I, such monuments as these confer honour, not upon the great men, but upon little Roubillac.

Hitherto disappointed in my inquiry after the great, of the present age, I was resolved to mix in company, and try what I could learn among critics in coffee-houses; and here it was that I heard my favourite names talked of even with inverted fame. A gentleman of exalted merit as a writer was branded in general terms as a bad man; another of exquisite delicacy as a poet was reproached for wanting good-nature; a third was accused of free-thinking; and a fourth of having once been a player. Strange! cried I, how unjust are mankind in the distribution of fame; the ignorant among whom I sought at first were willing to grant, but incapable of distinguishing the virtues of those who deserved it; among those I now converse with, they know the proper objects of admiration, but mix envy with applause.

Disappointed so often, I was now resolved to examine those characters in person of whom the world talked so freely; by conversing with men of real

merit, I began to find out those characters which really deserved, though they strove to avoid, applause. I found the vulgar admiration entirely misplaced, and malevolence without its sting. The truly great, possessed of numerous small faults and shining virtues preserve a sublime in morals as in writing. They who have attained an excellence in either commit numberless transgressions, observable to the meanest understanding. The ignorant critic and dull remarker can readily spy blemishes in eloquence or morals, whose sentiments are not sufficiently elevated to observe a beauty ; but such are judges neither of books nor of life ; they can diminish no solid reputation by their censure, nor bestow a lasting character by their applause : in short, I found by my search, that such only can confer real fame upon others, who have merit themselves to deserve it.

Adieu.

LETTER CIX.

TO THE SAME.

THERE are numberless employments in the courts of the Eastern monarchs utterly unpractised and unknown in Europe. They have no such officers, for instance, as the emperor's ear-tickler, or tooth-picker ; they have never introduced at the courts the mandarine appointed to bear the royal tobacco-box, or the grave director of the imperial exercitations in the seraglio. Yet I am surprised that the English have imi-

tated us in none of these particulars, as they are generally pleased with every thing that comes from China, and excessively fond of creating new and useless employments. They have filled their houses with our furniture, their public gardens with our fireworks, and their very ponds with our fish; our courtiers, my friend, are the fish and the furniture they should have imported; our courtiers would fill up the necessary ceremonies of a court better than those of Europe; would be contented with receiving large salaries for doing little; whereas some of this country are at present discontented though they receive large salaries for doing nothing.

I lately therefore had thoughts of publishing a proposal here, for the admission of some new Eastern offices and titles into their court register. As I consider myself in the light of a Cosmopolite, I find as much satisfaction in scheming for the countries in which I happen to reside, as for that in which I was born.

The finest apartments in the palace of Pegu, are frequently infested with rats. These the religion of the country strictly forbids the people to kill. In such circumstances therefore they are obliged to have recourse to some great man of the court, who is willing to free the royal apartments even at the hazard of his salvation. After a weak monarch's reign, the quantity of court vermin in every corner of the palace is surprising, but a prudent king and a vigilant officer soon drive them from their sanctuaries behind the mats and the tapestry, and effectually free the court. Such an officer in England would in my opinion be serviceable at this juncture; for if, as I am told, the palace be old, much vermin must undoubtedly have taken refuge behind the wainscoat and hanging. A minister should therefore be invested with the title and digni-

ties of court-vermin-killer; he should have full power either to banish, take, poison or destroy them, with enchantments, traps, ferrets, or ratsbane. He might be permitted to brandish his besom without remorse, and brush down every part of the furniture, without sparing a single cobweb, however sacred by long prescription. I communicated this proposal some days ago in a company of the first distinction, and enjoying the most honourable offices of the state. Among the number were the inspector of Great-Britain, Mr. Henriques, the director of the ministry, Ben. Victor the treasurer, John Lockman the secretary, and the conductor of the Imperial Magazine. They all acquiesced in the utility of my proposal, but were apprehensive it might meet with some obstructions from court upholsterers and chamber-maids, who would object to it from the demolitions of the furniture, and the dangerous use of ferrets and ratsbane.

My next proposal is rather more general than the former, and might probably meet with less opposition. Though no people in the world flatter each other more than the English, I know none who understand the art less, and flatter with such little refinement. Their panegyric, like a Tartar feast, is indeed served up with profusion, but their cookery is insupportable. A client here shall dress up a fricassee for his patron, that shall offend an ordinary nose before it enters the room. A town shall send up their address to a great minister which shall prove at once a satire on the minister and themselves. If the favourite of the day sits or stands, or sleeps, there are poets to put it into verse, and priests to preach it in the pulpit. In order therefore to free both those who praise, and those who are praised from a duty probably disagreeable to both, I would constitute professed flatterers here as in several courts of India. These are appointed in the courts

of their princes, to instruct the people where to exclaim with admiration, and where to lay an emphasis of praise. But an officer of this kind is always in waiting, when the emperor converses in a familiar manner among his Rajas and other nobility. At every sentence, when the monarch pauses, and smiles at what he has been saying, the Karamatman, as this officer is called, is to take it for granted, that his majesty has said a good thing. Upon which he cries out Karamat! Karamat! a miracle, a miracle! and throws up his hands and his eyes in extacy. This is echoed by the courtiers around, while the emperor sits all this time in sullen satisfaction, enjoying the triumph of his joke, or studying a new repartee.

I would have such an officer placed at every great man's table in England. By frequent practice he might soon become a perfect master of the art, and in time would turn out pleasing to his patron, no way troublesome to himself, and might prevent the nauseous attempts of many more ignorant pretenders. The clergy here, I am convinced, would relish this proposal. It would provide places for several of them. And indeed by some of their late productions, many appeared to have qualified themselves as candidates for this office already.

But my last proposal I take to be of the utmost importance. Our neighbour the empress of Russia has, you may remember, instituted an order of female knighthood. The empress of Germany has also instituted another; the Chinese have had such an order time immemorial. I am amazed the English have never come into such an institution. When I consider what kind of men are made knights here, it appears strange that they have never conferred this honour upon women. They make cheesemongers and pastry-cooks knights; then why not their wives? They have called up tallow-chandlers to maintain the

hardy profession of chivalry and arms; then why not their wives? Haberdashers are sworn, as I suppose all knights must be sworn, *never to fly in time of mellay or battle, to maintain and uphold the noble estate of chivalry, with horse, harnishe, and other knightlye habilaments.* Haberdashers, I say, are sworn to all this, then why not their wives? Certain I am their wives understand fighting, and feats of mellay, and battle, better than they, and as for knightly horse and harnishe, it is probable both know nothing more than the harness of a one horse chaise. No, no, my friend, instead of conferring any order upon the husbands, I would knight their wives. However, the state should not be troubled with a new institution upon this occasion. Some ancient exploded order might be revived, which would furnish both a motto and a name, the ladies might be permitted to choose for themselves. There are for instance the obsolete orders of the *Dragon* in Germany, of the *Rue* in Scotland, and the *Porcupine* in France, all well sounding names, and very applicable to my intended female institution. Adieu.

LETTER CX.

TO THE SAME.

RELIGIOUS sects in England are far more numerous than in China. Every man who has interest enough to hire a conventicle here, may set up for himself and sell off a new religion. The sellers of the newest pattern at present give extreme good bar-

gains; and let their disciples have a great deal of *confidence* for very little money.

Their shops are much frequented, and their customers every day increasing, for people are naturally fond of going to Paradise at as small expense as possible.

Yet you must not conceive this modern sect as differing in opinion from those of the established religion: difference of opinion indeed formerly divided their sectaries, and sometimes drew their armies to the field. White gowns and black mantles, flapped hats and cross pocket holes, were once the obvious causes of quarrel; men then had some reason for fighting, they knew what they fought about; but at present they are arrived at such refinement in religion-making, that they have actually formed a new sect without a new opinion; they quarrel for opinions they both equally defend; they hate each other, and that is all the difference between them.

But though their principles are the same, their practice is somewhat different. Those of the established religion laugh when they are pleased, and their groans are seldom extorted but by pain or danger. The new sect, on the contrary, weep for their amusement, and use little music except a chorus of sighs and groans, or tunes that are made to imitate groaning. Laughter is their aversion; lovers court each other from the Lamentations; the bridegroom approaches the nuptial couch in sorrowful solemnity, and the bride looks more dismal than an undertaker's shop. Dancing round the room is with them running in a direct line to the devil; and as for gaming, though but in jest, they would sooner play with a rattle-snake's tail, than finger a dice-box

By this time you perceive that I am describing a sect of enthusiasts, and you have already compared them with

the Faquirs, Bramins, and Talapoins of the East. Among these you know, are generations that have been never known to smile, and voluntary affliction makes up all the merit they can boast of. Enthusiasms in every country produce the same effects; stick the Faquir with pins, or confine the Bramin to a vermine hospital, spread the Talapoin on the ground, or load the sectary's brow with contrition; those worshippers who discard the light of reason, are ever gloomy; their fears increase in proportion to their ignorance, as men are continually under apprehensions who walk in darkness.

Yet there is still a stronger reason for the enthusiast's being an enemy to laughter, namely, his being himself so proper an object of ridicule. It is remarkable that the propagators of false doctrines, have ever been averse to mirth, and always begin by recommending gravity, when they intended to disseminate imposture. Fohi, the idol of China, is represented as having never laughed; Zoroaster, the leader of the Bramins, is said to have laughed but twice, upon his coming into the world, and upon his leaving it; and Mahomet himself, though a lover of pleasure, was a professed opposer of gayety. Upon a certain occasion, telling his followers, that they would all appear naked at the resurrection, his favourite wife represented such an assembly as immodest and unbecoming. Foolish woman, cried the grave prophet, though the whole assembly be naked, on that day they shall have forgotten to laugh. Men like him opposed ridicule, because they knew it to be a most formidable antagonist, and preached up gravity, to conceal their own want of importance.

Ridicule has ever been the most powerful enemy of enthusiasm, and properly the only antagonist that can be opposed to it with success. Persecution only

serves to propagate new religions; they acquire fresh vigour beneath the executioner and the axe, and like some vivacious insects, multiply by dissection. It is also impossible to combat enthusiasm with reason, for though it makes a show of resistance, it soon eludes the pressure, refers you to distinctions not to be understood, and feelings which it cannot explain. A man who would endeavour to fix an enthusiast by argument, might as well attempt to spread quicksilver with his fingers. The only way to conquer a visionary, is to despise him; the stake, the faggot, and the disputing doctor, in some measure ennoble the opinions they are brought to oppose; they are harmless against innovating pride; contempt alone is truly dreadful. Hunters generally know the most vulnerable part of the beasts they pursue, by the care which every animal takes to defend the side which is weakest; on what side the enthusiast is most vulnerable, may be known by the care which he takes in the beginning to work his disciples into gravity, and guard them against the power of ridicule.

When Philip the second was King of Spain, there was a contest in Salamanca between two orders of friars for superiority. The legend of one side contained more extraordinary miracles, but the legend of the other was reckoned most authentic. They reviled each other, as it is usual in disputes of divinity; the people were divided into factions, and a civil war appeared unavoidable. In order to prevent such an imminent calamity, the combatants were prevailed upon to submit their legends to the fiery trial, and that which came forth untouched by the fire was to have the victory, and to be honoured with a double share of reverence. Whenever the people flock to see a miracle, it is an hundred to one but that they see a miracle; incredible therefore were the numbers that

were gathered round upon this occasion; the friars on each side approached, and confidently threw their respective legends into the flames, when lo! to the utter disappointment of all the assembly, instead of a miracle, both legends were consumed. Nothing but thus turning both parties into contempt, could have prevented the effusion of blood. The people now laughed at their former folly, and wondered why they fell out.

Adieu.

LETTER CXI.

TO THE SAME.

THE English are at present employed in celebrating a feast which becomes general every seventh year; the parliament of the nation being then dissolved, and another appointed to be chosen. This solemnity falls infinitely short of our feast of the lanterns in magnificence and splendour; it is also surpassed by others of the East in unanimity and pure devotion; but no festival in the world can compare with it for eating. Their eating indeed amazes me; had I five hundred heads, and were each head furnished with brains, yet would they all be insufficient to compute the number of cows, pigs, geese, and turkies, which upon this occasion die for the good of their country!

To say the truth, eating seems to make a grand ingredient in all English parties of zeal, business, or amusement. When a church is to be built, or an

hospital endowed, the directors assemble, and instead of consulting upon it, they eat upon it, by which means the business goes forward with success. When the poor are to be relieved, the officers appointed to dole out public charity, assemble and eat upon it: nor has it ever been known, that they filled the bellies of the poor till they had previously satisfied their own. But in the election of magistrates, the people seem to exceed all bounds; the merits of a candidate are often measured by the number of his treats; his constituents assemble, eat upon him, and lend their applause, not to his integrity or sense, but the quantities of his beef and brandy.

And yet I could forgive this people their plentiful meals on this occasion, as it is extremely natural for every man to eat a great deal when he gets it for nothing; but what amazes me is, that all this good living no way contributes to improve their good humour. On the contrary, they seem to lose their temper as they lose their appetites; every morsel they swallow, and every glass they pour down, serves to increase their animosity. Many an honest man, before as harmless as a tame rabbit, when loaded with a single election dinner, has become more dangerous than a charged culverin. Upon one of these occasions, I have actually seen a bloody-minded man-milliner sally forth at the head of a mob, determined to face a desperate pastry-cook, who was general of the opposite party.

But you must not suppose they are without a pretext for thus beating each other On the contrary, no man here is so uncivilized as to beat his neighbour without producing very sufficient reasons. One candidate, for instance, treats with gin, a spirit of their own manufacture; another always drinks brandy imported from abroad. Brandy is a wholesome liquor;

gin a liquor wholly their own. This then furnishes an obvious cause of quarrel, whether it be most reasonable to get drunk with gin, or get drunk with brandy? The mob meet upon the debate; fight themselves sober; and then draw off to get drunk again, and charge for another encounter. So that the English may now properly be said to be engaged in war; since while they are subduing their enemies abroad, they are breaking each other's heads at home.

I lately made an excursion to a neighbouring village, in order to be a spectator of the ceremonies practised upon this occasion. I left town in company with three fiddlers, nine dozen of hams, and a corporation poet, which were designed as reinforcements to the gin-drinking party. We entered the town with a very good face; the fiddlers, no way intimidated by the enemy, kept handling their arms up the principal street. By this prudent manœuvre they took peaceable possession of their head quarters, amidst the shouts of multitudes, who seemed perfectly rejoiced at hearing their music, but above all at seeing their bacon.

I must own I could not avoid being pleased to see all ranks of people on this occasion, levelled into an equality, and the poor, in some measure, enjoy the primitive privileges of Nature. If there was any distinction shown, the lowest of the people seemed to receive it from the rich. I could perceive a cobler with a levee at his door, and an haberdasher giving audience from behind his counter. But my reflections were soon interrupted by a mob, who demanded whether I was for the distillery or the brewery? As these were terms with which I was totally unacquainted, I chose at first to be silent; however, I know not what might have been the consequence of my reserve,

had not the attention of the mob been called off to a skirmish between a brandy-drinker's cow, and a gin-drinker's mastiff, which turned out greatly to the satisfaction of the mob in favour of the mastiff.

The spectacle, which afforded high entertainment, was at last ended by the appearance of one of the candidates; who came to harangue the mob; he made a very pathetic speech upon the late excessive importation of foreign drams, and the downfall of the distillery: I could see some of the audience shed tears. He was accompanied in his procession by Mrs. Deputy and Mrs. Mayoress. Mrs. Deputy was not in the least in liquor; and for Mrs. Mayoress, one of the spectators assured me in my ear that,—She was a very fine woman before she had the small-pox.

Mixing with the crowd, I was now conducted to the hall where the magistrates are chosen; but what tongue can describe this scene of confusion; the whole crowd seemed equally inspired with anger, jealousy, politics, patriotism, and punch; I remarked one figure that was carried up by two men upon this occasion. I at first began to pity his infirmities as natural, but soon found the fellow so drunk that he could not stand; another made his appearance to give his vote, but though he could stand, he actually lost the use of his tongue, and remained silent; a third, who though excessively drunk could both stand and speak, being asked the candidate's name for whom he voted, could be prevailed upon to make no other answer, but tobacco and brandy. In short, an election-hall seems to be a theatre where every passion is seen without disguise; a school where fools may readily become worse, and where philosophers may gather wisdom. Adieu.

LETTER CXII.

FROM THE SAME.

THE disputes among the learned here are now carried on in a much more compendious manner than formerly. There was a time when folio was brought to oppose folio, and a champion was often listed for life under the banners of a single sorites. At present the controversy is decided in a summary way; an epigram or an acrostic finishes the debate, and the combatant, like the incursive Tartar, advances, and retires with a single blow.

An important literary debate at present engrosses the attention of the town. It is carried on with sharpness, and a proper share of this epigrammatical fury. An author, it seems, has taken an aversion to the faces of several players, and has written verses to prove his dislike; the players fall upon the author, and assure the town he must be dull, and their faces must be good, because he wants a dinner; a critic comes to the poet's assistance, asserting that the verses were perfectly original, and so smart that he could never have written them without the assistance of friends; the friends upon this arraign the critic, and plainly prove the verses to be all the author's own. So at it they are all four together by the ears, the friends at the critic, the critic at the players, the players at the author, and the author at the players again. It is impossible to determine how this many-sided contest will end, or which party to adhere to. The town,

without siding with any, views the combat in suspense, like the fabled hero of antiquity, who beheld the earth-born brothers give and receive mutual wounds, and fall by indiscriminate destruction.

This is in some measure a state of the present dispute; but the combatants here differ in one respect from the champions of the fable. Every new wound only gives vigour for another blow; though they appear to strike, they are in fact mutually swelling themselves into consideration, and thus advertising each other away into fame. To-day, says one, my name shall be in the Gazette, the next day my rival's; people will naturally inquire about us; thus we shall at least make a noise in the streets, though we have got nothing to sell. I have read of a dispute of a similar nature, which was managed here about twenty years ago. Hildebrand Jacob, as I think he was called, and Charles Johnson were poets, both at that time possessed of great reputation, for Johnson had written eleven plays acted with great success, and Jacob, though he had written but five, had five times thanked the town for their unmerited applause.—They soon became mutually enamoured of each other's talents; they wrote, they felt, they challenged the town for each other. Johnson assured the public that no poet alive had the easy simplicity of Jacob, and Jacob exhibited Johnson as a master-piece in the pathetic. Their mutual praise was not without effect. The town saw their plays, were in raptures, read, and without censuring them, forgot them. So formidable an union, however, was soon opposed by Tibbald. Tibbald asserted that the tragedies of one had faults, and the comedies of the other substituted wit for vivacity; the combined champions flew at him like tygers, arraigned the censurer's judgment,

and impeached his sincerity. It was a long time a dispute among the learned, which was in fact the greatest man, Jacob, Johnson, or Tibbald; they had all written for the stage with great success, their names were seen in almost every paper, and their works in every coffee-house. However, in the hottest of the dispute, a fourth combatant made his appearance, and swept away the three combatants, tragedy, comedy, and all into undistinguished ruin.

From this time they seemed consigned into the hands of criticism, scarcely a day passed in which they were not arraigned as detested writers. The critics, these enemies of Dryden and Pope, were their enemies. So Jacob and Johnson, instead of mending by criticism, called it envy, and because Dryden and Pope were censured, they compared themselves to Dryden and Pope.

But to return, the weapon chiefly used in the present controversy is epigram, and certainly never was a keener made use of. They have discovered surprising sharpness on both sides. The first that came out upon this occasion was a kind of new composition in this way, and might more properly be called an epigrammatic thesis, than an epigram. It consists, first, of an argument in prose; next follows a motto from Roscommon; then comes the epigram; and lastly notes serving to explain the epigram. But you shall have it with all its decorations.

An EPIGRAM,

Addressed to the Gentlemen reflected on in the ROSCIAD, *a Poem, by the Author.*

Worry'd with debts, and past all hopes of bail,
His pen he prostitutes t' avoid a gaol.

ROSCOM.

" Let not the *hungry* Bavius' angry stroke
" Awake resentment, or your rage provoke;
" But pitying his distress, let virtue* shine,
" And giving each your bounty†, *let him dine;*
" For thus retain'd, as learned counsel can,
" Each case, however bad, he'll new-japan:
" And by a quick transition plainly show
" 'Twas no defect of yours, but *pocket low*,
" That caus'd his *putrid kennel* to o'erflow.

The last lines are certainly executed in a very masterly manner. It is of that species of argumentation, called the perplexing. It effectually flings the antagonist into a mist; there is no answering it: the laugh is raised against him, while he is endeavouring to find out the jest. At once he shows, that the author has a kennel, and that this kennel is putrid, and that this putrid kennel overflows. But why does it overflow? It overflows, because the author happens to have low pockets!

There was also another new attempt in this way; a prosaic epigram which came out upon this occasion. This is so full of matter, that a critic might split it into fifteen epigrams, each properly fitted with its sting. You shall see it.

* Charity.

† Settled at one shilling, the price of the poem.

To G. C. and R. L.

" 'Twas you, or I, or he, or all together,
" 'Twas one, both, three of them, they know not whether.
" This I believe, between us great or small,
" You, I, he, wrote it not—'twas Churchill's all."

There, there is a perplex! I could have wished, to make it quite perfect, the author, as in the case before, had added notes. Almost every word admits a scholium, and a long one too. I, YOU, HE! Suppose a stranger should ask, and who are you? Here are three obscure persons spoken of, that may in a short time be utterly forgotten. Their names should have consequently been mentioned in notes at the bottom. But when the reader comes to the words *great* and *small*, the maze is inextricable. Here the stranger may dive for a mystery, without ever reaching the bottom. Let him know then, that *small* is a word purely introduced to make good rhyme, and *great* was a very proper word to keep *small* company.

Yet by being thus a spectator of others dangers, I must own I begin to tremble in this literary contest for my own. I begin to fear that my challenge to Doctor Rock was unadvised, and has procured me more antagonists than I had at first expected. I have received private letters from several of the literati here, that fill my soul with apprehension. I may safely aver, that *I never gave any creature in this good city offence*, except only my rival Doctor Rock, yet by the letters I every day receive, and by some I have seen printed, I am arraigned at one time as being a dull fellow, at another as being pert; I am here petulant, there I am heavy; by the head of my an-

cestors, they treat me with more inhumanity than a flying fish. If I dive and run my nose to the bottom, there a devouring shark is ready to swallow me up; if I skim the surface, a pack of dolphins are at my tail to snap me; but when I take wing and attempt to escape them by flight, I become a prey to every ravenous bird that winnows the bosom of the deep.

Adieu.

LETTER CXIII.

TO THE SAME.

THE formalities, delays and disappointments, that precede a treaty of marriage here, are usually as numerous as those previous to a treaty of peace. The laws of this country are finely calculated to promote all commerce, but the commerce between the sexes. Their encouragements for propagating hemp, madder and tobacco, are indeed admirable! Marriages are the only commodity that meet with none.

Yet from the vernal softness of the air, the verdure of the fields, the transparency of the streams, and the beauty of the women, I know few countries more proper to invite to courtship. Here love might sport among painted lawns and warbling groves, and revel upon gales wafting at once both fragrance and harmony. Yet it seems he has forsaken the island; and when a couple are now to be married, mutual love or

an union of minds is the last and most trifling consideration. If their goods and chattels can be brought to unite, their sympathetic souls are ever ready to guarantee the treaty. The gentleman's mortgaged lawn becomes enamoured of the lady's marriageable grove; the match is struck up, and both parties are piously in love—according to act of parliament.

Thus they, who have fortune, are possessed at least of something that is lovely; but I actually pity those that have none. I am told there was a time, when ladies with no other merit but youth, virtue and beauty, had a chance for husbands, at least, among the ministers of the church, or the officers of the army. The blush and innocence of sixteen was said to have a powerful influence over these two professions. But of late, all the little traffic of blushing, ogling, dimpling, and smiling, has been forbidden by an act, in that case wisely made and provided. A lady's whole cargo of smiles, sighs and whispers, is declared utterly contraband, till she arrives in the warm latitudes of twenty-two, where commodities of this nature are two often found to decay. She is then permitted to dimple and smile, when the dimples and smiles begin to forsake her; and when perhaps grown ugly, is charitably entrusted with an unlimited use of her charms. Her lovers, however, by this time have forsaken her; the captain has changed for another mistress; the priest himself leaves her in solitude, to bewail her virginity, and she dies even without benefit of clergy.

Thus you find the Europeans discouraging love with as much earnestness as the rudest savage of Sofala. The Genius is surely now no more. In every region I find enemies in arms to oppress him. Avarice in Europe, jealousy in Persia, ceremony in Chi-

na, poverty among the Tartars, and lust in Circassia, are all prepared to oppose his power. The Genius is certainly banished from earth, though once adored under such a variety of forms. He is no where to be found; and all that the ladies of each country can produce, are but a few trifling reliques as instances of his former residence and favour.

The Genius of Love, says the Eastern Apologue, had long resided in the happy plains of Abra, where every breeze was health, and every sound produced tranquillity. His temple at first was crowded, but every age lessened the number of his votaries, or cooled their devotion. Perceiving, therefore, his altars at length quite deserted, he was resolved to remove to some more propitious region, and he apprised the fair sex of every country, where he could hope for a proper reception, to assert their right to his presence among them. In return to this proclamation, embassies were sent from the ladies of every part of the world to invite him, and to display the superiority of their claims.

And first the beauties of China appeared. No country could compare with them for modesty, either of look, dress, or behaviour; their eyes were never lifted from the ground; their robes of the most beautiful silk hid their hands, bosom and neck, while their faces were only left uncovered. They indulged no airs that might express loose desire, and they seemed to study only the graces of inanimate beauty. Their black teeth and plucked eye-brows were, however, alleged by the Genius against them, but he set them entirely aside when he came to examine their little feet.

The beauties of Circassia next made their appearance. They advanced hand-in-hand, singing the most

immodest airs, and leading up a dance in the most luxurious attitudes. Their dress was but half a covering; the neck, the left breast, and all the limbs, were exposed to view, which after some time seemed rather to satiate than inflame desire. The lily and the rose contended in forming their complexions; and a soft sleepiness of eye added irresistible poignance to their charms: but their beauties were obtruded, not offered, to their admirers; they seemed to give rather than receive courtship; and the Genius of love dismissed them as unworthy his regard, since they exchanged the duties of love, and made themselves not the pursued, but the pursuing sex.

The kingdom of Kashmire next produced its charming deputies. This happy region seemed peculiarly sequestered by Nature for his abode. Shady mountains fenced it on one side from the scorching sun; and sea-born breezes, on the other, gave peculiar luxuriance to the air. Their complexions were of a bright yellow, that appeared almost transparent, while the crimson tulip seemed to blossom on their cheeks. Their features and limbs were delicate beyond the statuary's power to express; and their teeth whiter than their own ivory. He was almost persuaded to reside among them, when unfortunately one of the ladies talked of appointing his seraglio.

In this procession the naked inhabitants of Southern America would not be left behind; their charms were found to surpass whatever the warmest imagination could conceive; and served to show, that beauty could be perfect, even with the seeming disadvantage of a brown complexion. But their savage education rendered them utterly unqualified to make the proper use of their power, and they were rejected as being

incapable of uniting mental with sensual satisfaction. In this manner the deputies of other kingdoms had their suits rejected: the black beauties of Benin, and the tawny daughters of Borneo, the women of Wida with well-scarred faces, and the hideous virgins of Cafraria; the squab ladies of Lapland, three feet high, and the giant fair ones of Patagonia.

The beauties of Europe at last appeared: grace was in their steps, and sensibility sate smiling in every eye. It was the universal opinion while they were approaching, that they would prevail; and the Genius seemed to lend them his most favourable attention. They opened their pretensions with the utmost modesty; but unfortunately as their orator proceeded she happened to let fall the words *house in town, settlement and pin-money.* These seemingly harmless terms had instantly a surprising effect: the Genius with ungovernable rage burst from amidst the circle; and waving his youthful pinions, left this earth, and flew back to those etherial mansions from which he descended.

The whole assembly was struck with amazement: they now justly apprehended, that female power would be no more, since love had forsaken them. They continued some time thus in a state of torpid despair, when it was proposed by one of the number, that, since the real Genius had left them, in order to continue their power, they should set up an idol in his stead; and that the ladies of every country should furnish him with what each liked best. This proposal was instantly relished and agreed to. An idol was formed by uniting the capricious gifts of all the assembly, though no way resembling the departed Genius. The ladies of China furnished the monster with wings; those of Kashmire supplied him with

horns; the dames of Europe clapped a purse in his hand; and the virgins of Congo furnished him with a tail. Since that time, all the vows addressed to Love are in reality paid to the idol; but, as in other false religions, the adoration seems most fervent where the heart is least sincere.

Adieu.

LETTER CXIV.

TO THE SAME.

MANKIND have ever been prone to expatiate on the praise of human nature. The dignity of man is a subject that has always been the favourite theme of humanity; they have declaimed with that ostentation, which usually accompanies such as are sure of having a partial audience: they have obtained victories because there were none to oppose. Yet from all I have ever read or seen, men appear more apt to err by having too high, than by having too despicable an opinion of their nature; and by attempting to exalt their original place in the creation, depress their real value in society.

The most ignorant nations have always been found to think most highly of themselves. The Deity has ever been thought peculiarly concerned in their glory and preservation; to have fought their battles, and inspired their teachers: their wizards are said to be

familiar with Heaven : and every hero has a guard of angels, as well as men, to attend him. When the Portuguese first came among the wretched inhabitants of the coast of Africa, these savage nations readily allowed the strangers more skill in navigation and war ; yet still considered them at best, but as useful servants brought to their coasts, by their guardian serpent, to supply them with luxuries they could have lived without. Though they could grant the Portuguese more riches, they could never allow them to have such a king as their Tottimondelem, who wore a bracelet of shells round his neck, and whose legs were covered with ivory.

In this manner, examine a savage in the history of his country and predecessors ; you ever find his warriors able to conquer armies, and his sages acquainted with more than possible knowledge : human nature is to him an unknown country : he thinks it capable of great things, because he is ignorant of its boundaries ; whatever can be conceived to be done he allows to be possible, and whatever is possible he conjectures must have been done. He never measures the actions and powers of others by what himself is able to perform, nor makes a proper estimate of the greatness of his fellows by bringing it to the standard of his own incapacity. He is satisfied to be one of a country where mighty things have been ; and imagines the fancied power of others reflects a lustre on himself. Thus, by degrees, he loses the idea of his own insignificance in a confused notion of the extraordinary powers of humanity, and is willing to grant extraordinary gifts to every pretender, because unacquainted with their claims.

This is the reason why demi-gods and heroes have ever been erected in times or countries of ig-

norance and barbarity; they addressed a people who had high opinions of human nature, because they were ignorant how far it could extend; they addressed a people who were willing to allow that men should be gods, because they were yet imperfectly acquainted with God, and with man. These impostors knew, that all men are naturally fond of seeing something very great made from the little materials of humanity; that ignorant nations are not more proud of building a tower to reach Heaven, or a pyramid to last for ages, than of raising up a demi-god of their own country and creation. The same pride that erects a colossus or a pyramid, instals a god or an hero: but though the adoring savage can raise his colossus to the clouds, he can exalt the hero not one inch above the standard of humanity; incapable therefore of exalting the idol, he debases himself and falls prostrate before him.

When man has thus acquired an erroneous idea of the dignity of his species, he and the gods become perfectly intimate; men are but angels, angels are but men, nay but servants that stand in waiting to execute human commands. The Persians, for instance, thus address their prophet Haly*. 'I salute thee, 'glorious Creator, of whom the sun is but the sha-'dow. Masterpiece of the Lord of human creatures, 'Great Star of Justice and Religion. The sea is not 'rich and liberal but by the gifts of thy munificent 'hands. The angel treasurer of Heaven reaps his 'harvest in the fertile gardens of the purity of thy 'nature. The primum mobile would never dart the 'ball of the sun through the trunk of Heaven, were it 'not to serve the morning out of the extreme love

* Chaudin's Travels, p. 402.

'she has for thee. The angel Gabriel, messenger of 'truth, every day kisses the groundsil of thy gate. 'Were there a place more exalted than the most 'high throne of God, I would affirm it to be thy 'place, O master of the faithful; Gabriel with all 'his art and knowledge is but a mere scholar to thee.' Thus my friend, men think proper to treat angels; but if indeed there be such an order of beings, with what a degree of satirical contempt must they listen to the songs of little mortals thus flattering each other. Thus to see creatures, wiser indeed than the monkey, and more active than the oyster, claiming to themselves the mastery of Heaven; minims, the tenants of an atom, thus arrogating a partnership in the creation of universal Heaven! Surely Heaven is kind that launches no thunder at those guilty heads; but it is kind, and regards their follies with pity, nor will destroy creatures that it loved into being.

But whatever success this practice of making demigods might have been attended with in barbarous nations, I do not know that any man became a god in a country, where the inhabitants were refined. Such countries generally have too close an inspection into human weakness, to think it invested with celestial power. They sometimes indeed admit the gods of strangers, or of their ancestors, which had their existence in times of obscurity; their weakness being forgotten, while nothing but their power and their miracles were remembered. The Chinese, for instance, never had a god of their own country; the idols which the vulgar worship at this day were brought from the barbarous nations around them. The Roman emperors, who pretended to divinity, were generally taught by a poignard that they were mortal; and Alexander, though he passed among

barbarous countries for a real god, could never persuade his polite countrymen into a similitude of thinking. The Lacedemonians shrewdly complied with his commands by the following sarcastic edict:

Ει Αλεξανδρος ϑελει ειναι Θεος, Θεος, εστω.

Adieu.

LETTER CXV.

TO THE SAME.

THERE is something irresistibly pleasing in the conversation of a fine woman; even though her tongue be silent, the eloquence of her eyes teaches wisdom. The mind sympathizes with the regularity of the object in view, and struck with external grace, vibrates into respondent harmony. In this agreeable disposition, I lately found myself in company with my friend and his niece. Our conversation turned upon love, which she seemed equally capable of defending and inspiring. We were each of different opinions upon this subject; the lady insisted that it was a natural and universal passion, and produced the happiness of those who cultivated it with proper precaution. My friend denied it to be the work of Nature, but allowed it to have a real existence, and affirmed that it was of infinite service in refining society; while I, to keep up the dispute, affirmed it to be merely a name, first used by the cunning part of the fair sex, and admitted by the silly part of ours, therefore no way more natural than taking snuff, or chewing opium.

" How is it possible," cried I, " that such a pas-
" sion can be natural, when our opinions even of
" beauty, which inspires it, are entirely the result
" of fashion and caprice ? The ancients, who pre-
" tend to be connoisseurs in the art, have praised
" narrow foreheads, red hair, and eye-brows that
" joined each other above the nose. Such were the
" charms that once captivated Catullus, Ovid, and
" Anacreon. Ladies would at present be out of
" humour, if their lovers praised them for such
" graces; and should an antique beauty now re-
" vive, her face would certainly be put under the
" discipline of the tweezer, forehead-cloth and
" lead comb, before it could be seen in public
" company.

" But the difference between the ancients and
" moderns is not so great as between the different
" countries of the present world. A lover of Gon-
" gora, for instance, sighs for thick lips ; a Chinese
" lover is poetical in praise of thin. In Circassia a
" straight nose is thought most consistent with
" beauty ; cross but a mountain which separates it
" from the Tartars, and there flat noses, tawny
" skins, and eyes three inches asunder, are all the
" fashion. In Persia, and some other countries, a
" man when he marries, chooses to have his bride
" a maid ; in the Philippine Islands, if a bride-
" groom happens to perceive on the first night that
" he is put off with a virgin, the marriage is de-
" clared void to all intents and purposes, and the
" bride sent back with disgrace. In some parts of
" the East, a woman of beauty, properly fed up
" for sale, often amounts to one hundred crowns ;
" in the kingdom of Loango, ladies of the very
" best fashion are sold for a pig ; queens however

" sell better, and sometimes amount to a cow. In " short, turn even to England, do not I there see " the beautiful part of the sex neglected ; and none " now marrying or making love but old men and " old women that have saved money ? Do not I see " beauty from fifteen to twenty-one rendered null " and void to all intents and purposes, and those " six precious years of womanhood put under a sta- " tute of virginity ? What ! shall I call that rancid " passion love, which passes between an old bache- " lor of fifty-six and a widow lady of forty-nine ? " Never ! never ! What advantage is society to reap " from an intercourse, where the big belly is oftenest " on the man's side ? Would any persuade me that " such a passion was natural, unless the human race " were more fit for love as they approached the de- " cline, and, like silk-worms, became breeders, just " before they expired ?"

Whether love be natural or no, replied my friend gravely, it contributes to the happiness of every society into which it is introduced. All our pleasures are short, and can only charm at intervals : love is a method of protracting our greatest pleasure ; and surely that gamester, who plays the greatest stake to the best advantage, will at the end of life rise victorious. This was the opinion of Vanini, who affirmed, that *every hour was lost which was not spent in love.* His accusers were unable to comprehend his meaning, and the poor advocate for love was burned in flames ; alas, no way metaphorical. But whatever advantages the individual may reap from this passion, society will certainly be refined and improved by its introduction : all laws calculated to discourage it, tend to embrute the species and weaken the state. Though it cannot plant morals in the human breast, it cultivates them when there : pity,

generosity, and honour, receive a brighter polish from its assistance; and a single amour is sufficient entirely to brush off the clown.

But it is an exotic of the most delicate constitution: it requires the greatest art to introduce it into a state, and the smallest discouragement is sufficient to repress it again. Let us only consider with what ease it was formerly extinguished in Rome, and with what difficulty it was lately revived in Europe: it seemed to sleep for ages, and at last fought its way among us through tilts, tournaments, dragons, and all the dreams of chivalry. The rest of the world, China only excepted, are and have ever been utter strangers to its delights and advantages. In other countries, as men find themselves stronger than women, they lay a claim to a rigorous superiority; this is natural, and love which gives up this natural advantage must certainly be the effect of art. An art calculated to lengthen out our happier moments, and add new graces to society.

I entirely acquiesce in your sentiments, says the lady, with regard to the advantages of this passion, but cannot avoid giving it a nobler origin than you have been pleased to assign. I must think that those countries, where it is rejected, are obliged to have recourse to art to stifle so natural a production, and those nations, where it is cultivated, only make nearer advances to nature. The same efforts that are used in some places to suppress pity, and other natural passions, may have been employed to extinguish love. No nation, however unpolished, is remarkable for innocence, that is not famous for passion; it has flourished in the coldest as well as the warmest regions. Even in the sultry wilds of Southern America, the lover is not satisfied with possessing his mistress's person without having her mind.

In all my Enna's beauties blest,
Amidst profusion still I pine;
For though she gives me up her breast,
Its panting tenant is not mine *.

But the effects of love are too violent to be the result of an artificial passion. Nor is it in the power of fashion to force the constitution into those changes which we every day observe. Several have died of it. Few lovers are unacquainted with the fate of the two Italian lovers, Da Corsin, and Julia Bellamano, who after a long separation expired with pleasure in each other's arms. Such instances are too strong confirmations of the reality of the passion, and serve to show, that suppressing it is but opposing the natural dictates of the heart.

Adieu.

LETTER CXVI.

TO THE SAME.

THE clock just struck two, the expiring taper rises and sinks in the socket, the watchman forgets the hour in slumber, the laborious and the happy are at rest, and nothing wakes but meditation, guilt, revelry, and despair. The drunkard once more fills the destroying bowl, the robber walks his midnight round,

* *Translation of a South-American Ode.*

and the suicide lifts his guilty arm against his own sacred person.

Let me no longer waste the night over the page of antiquity, or the sallies of contemporary genius, but pursue the solitary walk where vanity, ever changing, but a few hours past walked before me, where she kept up the pageant, and now, like a froward child, seems hushed with her own importunities.

What a gloom hangs all around! the dying lamp feebly emits a yellow gleam, no sound is heard but of the chiming-clock, or the distant watch-dog. All the bustle of human pride is forgotten; an hour like this, may well display the emptiness of human vanity.

There will come a time when this temporary solitude may be made continual, and the city itself, like its inhabitants, fade away, and leave a desert in its room.

What cities as great as this have once triumphed in existence, had their victories as great, joy as just and as unbounded, and with short-sighted presumption, promised themselves immortality? Posterity can hardly trace the situation of some. The sorrowful traveller wanders over the awful ruins of others; and as he beholds, he learns wisdom, and feels the transience of every sublunary possession.

Here, he cries, stood their citadel, now grown over with weeds; there their senate-house, but now the haunt of every noxious reptile; temples and theatres stood here, now only an undistinguished heap of ruin. They are fallen, for luxury and avarice first made them feeble. The rewards of the state were conferred on amusing, and not on useful members of society. Their riches and opulence invited the invaders, who, though at first repulsed, returned again, conquered by perseverance, and at last swept the defendants into undistinguished destruction.

How few appear in those streets, which but some few hours ago were crowded; and those who appear now no longer wear their daily mask, nor attempt to hide their lewdness or their misery.

But who are those who make the streets their couch, and find a short repose from wretchedness at the doors of the opulent? These are strangers, wanderers, and orphans, whose circumstances are too humble to expect redress, and whose distresses are too great even for pity. Their wretchedness excites rather horror than pity. Some are without the covering even of rags, and others emaciated with disease; the world has disclaimed them; society turns its back upon their distress, and has given them up to nakedness and hunger. These poor shivering females have once seen happier days, and been flattered into beauty. They have been prostituted to the gay luxurious villain, and are now turned out to meet the severity of winter. Perhaps, now lying at the doors of their betrayers, they sue to wretches whose hearts are insensible, or debauchees who may curse, but will not relieve them.

Why, why, was I born a man, and yet see the sufferings of wretches I cannot relieve! Poor houseless creatures! the world will give you reproaches, but will not give you relief. The slightest misfortunes of the great, the most imaginary uneasinesses of the rich, are aggravated with all the power of eloquence, and held up to engage our attention and sympathetic sorrow. The poor weep unheeded, persecuted by every subordinate species of tyranny; and every law, which gives others security, becomes an enemy to them.

Why was this heart of mine formed with so much sensibility! or why was not my fortune adapted to its impulse! Tenderness, without a capacity of relieving,

only makes the man who feels it, more wretched than the object which sues for assistance.

Adieu.

LETTER CXVII.

Fum Hoam to Lien Chi Altangi, the discontented wanderer, by the way of Moscow.

I HAVE been just sent upon an embassy to Japan; my commission is to be dispatched in four days, and you can hardly conceive the pleasure I shall find upon revisiting my native country. I shall leave with joy this proud, barbarous, inhospitable region, where every object conspires to diminish my satisfaction, and increase my patriotism.

But though I find the inhabitants savage, yet the Dutch merchants who are permitted to trade hither, seem still more detestable. They have raised my dislike to Europe in general; by them I learn how low avarice can degrade human nature; how many indignities an European will suffer for gain.

I was present at an audience given by the emperor to the Dutch envoy, who had sent several presents to all the courtiers some days previous to his admission; but he was obliged to attend those designed for the emperor himself. From the accounts I had heard of this ceremony, my curiosity prompted me to be a spectator of the whole.

First went the presents, set out on beautiful enamelled tables, adorned with flowers, borne on men's shoulders, and followed by Japanese music and dancers. From so great respect paid to the gifts themselves, I had fancied the donors must have received almost divine honours. But about a quarter of an hour after the presents had been carried in triumph, the envoy and his train were brought forward. They were covered from head to foot with long black veils, which prevented their seeing, each led by a conductor, chosen from the meanest of the people. In this dishonourable manner, having traversed the city of Jedo, they at length arrived at the palace-gate, and after waiting half an hour, were admitted into the guard-room. Here their eyes were uncovered, and in about an hour the gentleman-usher introduced them into the hall of audience. The emperor was at length shown sitting in a kind of alcove at the upper end of the room, and the Dutch envoy was conducted towards the throne.

As soon as he had approached within a certain distance, the gentleman-usher cried out with a loud voice, *Holanda Capitan*; upon these words the envoy fell flat upon the ground, and crept upon his hands and feet towards the throne. Still approaching, he reared himself upon his knees, and then bowed his forehead to the ground. These ceremonies being over, he was directed to withdraw, still groveling on his belly, and going backwards like a lobster.

Men must be excessively fond of riches, when they are earned with such circumstances of abject submission? Do the Europeans worship Heaven itself with marks of more profound respect? Do they confer those honours on the Supreme of beings,

which they pay to a barbarous king, who gives them a permission to purchase trinkets and porcelaine? What a glorious exchange, to forfeit their national honour, and even their title to humanity, for a screen or a snuff-box!

If these ceremonies essayed in the first audience appeared mortifying, those which are practised in the second are infinitely more so. In the second audience, the emperor and the ladies of court were placed behind lattices in such a manner as to see without being seen. Here all the Europeans were directed to pass in review, and grovel and act the serpent as before: with this spectacle the whole court seemed highly delighted. The strangers were asked a thousand ridiculous questions; as their names, and their ages: they were ordered to write, to stand upright, to sit, to stop, to compliment each other, to be drunk, to speak the Japanese language, to talk Dutch, to sing, to eat; in short they were ordered to do all that could satisfy the curiosity of women.

Imagine, my dear Altangi, a set of grave men thus transformed into buffoons, and acting a part every whit as honourable as that of those instructed animals which are shown in the streets of Pekin to the mob on a holiday. Yet the ceremony did not end here, for every great lord of the court was to be visited in the same manner; and their ladies, who took the whim from their husbands, were all equally fond of seeing the strangers perform, even the children seemed highly diverted with the dancing Dutchmen.

Alas, cried I to myself, upon returning from such a spectacle, is this the nation which assumes such dignity at the court of Pekin? Is this that people

that appear so proud at home, and in every country where they have the least authority? How does a love of gain transform the gravest of mankind into the most contemptible and ridiculous? I had rather continue poor all my life, than become rich at such a rate. Perish those riches which are acquired at the expense of my honour or my humanity. Let me quit, said I, a country where there are none but such as treat all others like slaves, and more detestable still, in suffering such treatment. I have seen enough of this nation to desire to see more of others. Let me leave a people suspicious to excess, whose morals are corrupted, and equally debased by superstition and vice; where the sciences are left uncultivated, where the great are slaves to the prince, and tyrants to the people, where the women are chaste only when debarred of the power of transgression; where the true disciples of Confucius are not less persecuted than those of Christianity: in a word, a country where men are forbidden to think, and consequently labour under the most miserable slavery, that of mental servitude.

Adieu.

LETTER CXVIII.

From Lien Chi Altangi, to Fum Hoam, first President of the Ceremonial Academy at Pekin, in China.

THE misfortunes of the great, my friend, are held up to engage our attention, are enlarged upon in tones of declamation, and the world is called upon to gaze at the noble sufferers; they have at once the comfort of admiration and pity.

Yet where is the magnanimity of bearing misfortunes when the whole world is looking on? men in such circumstances can act bravely even from motives of vanity. He only who, in the vale of obscurity, can brave adversity, who without friends to encourage, acquaintances to pity, or even without hope to alleviate his distresses, can behave with tranquillity and indifference, is truly great: whether peasant or courtier, he deserves admiration, and should be held up for our imitation and respect.

The miseries of the poor are however entirely disregarded; though some undergo more real hardships in one day, than the great in their whole lives. It is indeed inconceivable what difficulties the meanest English sailor or soldier endures without murmuring or regret. Every day is to him a day of misery, and yet he bears his hard fate without repining.

With what indignation do I hear the heroes of tragedy complain of misfortunes and hardships, whose greatest calamity is founded in arrogance and pride! Their severest distresses are pleasures, compared to what many of the adventuring poor every day sustain, without murmuring. These may eat, drink, and sleep, have slaves to attend them, and are sure of subsistence for life, while many of their fellow-creatures are obliged to wander, without a friend to comfort or to assist them, find enmity in every law, and are too poor to obtain even justice.

I have been led into these reflections from accidentally meeting some days ago a poor fellow begging at one of the outlets of this town, with a wooden leg. I was curious to learn what had reduced him to his present situation; and after giving him what I thought proper, desired to know the history of his

life and misfortunes, and the manner in which he was reduced to his present distress. The disabled soldier, for such he was, with an intrepidity truly British, leaning on his crutch, put himself into an attitude to comply with my request, and gave me his history as follows :

'As for misfortunes, Sir, I cannot pretend to 'have gone through more than others. Except 'the loss of my limb, and my being obliged to 'beg, I don't know any reason, thank Heaven, that 'I have to complain : there are some who have lost 'both legs and an eye ; but thank Heaven, it is not 'quite so bad with me.

'My father was a labourer in the country, and 'died when I was five years old ; so I was put upon 'the parish. As he had been a wandering sort of a 'man, the parishoners were not able to tell to what 'parish I belonged, or where I was born ; so they 'sent me to another parish, and that parish sent me 'to a third ; till at last it was thought I belonged to 'no parish at all. At length, however, they fixed 'me. I had some disposition to be a scholar, and had 'actually learned my letters ; but the master of the 'workhouse put me to business as soon as I was able 'to handle a mallet.

'Here I lived an easy kind of a life for five years. 'I only wrought ten hours in the day, and had my 'meat and drink provided for my labour. It is true, 'I was not suffered to stir far from the house, for fear 'I should run away : but what of that : I had the li- 'berty of the whole house, and the yard before the 'door, and that was enough for me.

'I was next bound out to a farmer, where I was 'up both early and late, but I ate and drank well, and 'liked my business well enough, till he died. Being

'then obliged to provide for myself, was resolved to 'go and seek my fortune. Thus I lived, and went 'from town to town, working when I could get em- 'ployment, and starving when I could get none, and 'might have lived so still; but happening one day to 'go through a field belonging to a magistrate, I spied 'a hare crossing the path just before me. I believe 'the devil put in my head to fling my stick at it: 'well, what will you have on it? I killed the hare, 'and was bringing it away in triumph, when the jus- 'tice himself met me: he called me a villain, and 'collaring me, desired I would give an account of 'myself. I began immediately to give a full account 'of all that I knew of my breed, seed, and genera- 'tion: but though I gave a very long account, the 'justice said I could give no account of myself; so 'I was indicted, and found guilty of being poor, and 'sent to Newgate, in order to be transported to the 'plantations.

'People may say this and that of being in gaol; 'but for my part, I found Newgate as agreeable a 'place as ever I was in, in all my life. I had my 'belly-full to eat and drink, and did no work; but 'alas, this kind of life was too good to last for ever! 'I was taken out of prison, after five months, put on 'board of a ship, and sent off with two hundred more. 'Our passage was but indifferent, for we were all 'confined in the hold, and died very fast, for want of 'sweet air and provisions; but for my part, I did not 'want meat, because I had a fever all the way; pro- 'vidence was kind, when provisions grew short, it 'took away my desire of eating. When we came 'ashore, we were sold to the planters. I was bound 'for seven years, and as I was no scholar, for I had 'forgot my letters, I was obliged to work among the

'negroes; and served out my time, as in duty bound 'to do.

'When my time was expired, I worked my pas-'sage home, and glad I was to see old England again, 'because I loved my country. O liberty, liberty, li-'berty! that is the property of every Englishman, 'and I will die in its defence; I was afraid, however, 'that I should be indicted for a vagabond once more, 'so did not much care to go into the country, but kept 'about town, and did little jobs when I could get them. 'I was very happy in this manner for some time; 'till one evening, coming home from work, two men 'knocked me down, and then desired me to stand 'still. They belonged to a press-gang; I was car-'ried before the justice, and as I could give no ac-'count of myself (that was the thing that always hob-'bled me) I had my choice left, whether to go on 'board a man of war, or list for a soldier. I chose 'to be a soldier; and in this post of a gentleman I 'served two campaigns, was at the battles in Flan-'ders, and received but one wound through the breast, 'which is troublesome to this day.

'When the peace came on, I was discharged; and 'as I could not work, because my wound was some-'times painful, I listed for a landman in the East In-'dia Company's service. I here fought the French 'in six pitched battles; and verily believe that if I 'could read or write, our captain would have given 'me promotion, and made me a corporal. But that 'was not my good fortune, I soon fell sick, and when 'I became good for nothing, got leave to return 'home again with forty pounds in my pocket, which I 'saved in the service. This was at the beginning of 'the present war, so I hoped to be set on shore, and 'to have the pleasure of spending my money; but

'the government wanted men, and I was pressed 'again, before ever I could set foot on shore.

'The boatswain found me, as he said, an obstinate 'fellow: he swore that I understood my business per- 'fectly well, but that I pretended sickness merely to 'be idle: God knows, I knew nothing of sea busi- 'ness; he beat me without considering what he was 'about. But still my forty pounds was some comfort 'to me under every beating; the money was my com- 'fort, and the money I might have had to this day; 'but that our ship was taken by the French, and so I 'lost it all!

'Our crew was carried into a French prison, and 'many of them died, because they were not used to 'live in a gaol; but for my part it was nothing to me, 'for I was seasoned. One night, however, as I was 'sleeping on the bed of boards, with a warm blanket 'about me (for I always loved to lie well,) I was awak- 'ed by the boatswain, who had a dark lantern in his 'hand. 'Jack,' says he to me, 'will you knock out 'the French sentry's brains?' 'I dont care,' says I, 'striving to keep myself awake, if I lend a hand.' 'Then follow me,' says he, 'and I hope we shall do 'business.' So up I got, and tied my blanket, which 'was all the clothes I had, about my middle, and went 'with him to fight the Frenchmen: we had no arms; 'but one Englishman is able to beat five French at 'any time; so we went down to the door, where both 'the sentries were posted, and rushing upon them, 'seized their arms in a moment, and knocked them 'down. From thence, nine of us ran together to the 'quay, and seizing the first boat we met, got out of 'the harbour, and put to sea: we had not been here 'three days, before we were taken up by an English 'privateer, who was glad of so many good hands; 'and we consented to run our chance. However, we

'had not so much luck as we expected. In three 'days we fell in with a French man of war, of forty 'guns, while we had but twenty-three; so to it we 'went. The fight lasted for three hours, and I verily 'believe we should have taken the Frenchman, but 'unfortunately, we lost almost all our men, just as we 'were going to get the victory. I was once more in 'the power of the French, and I believe it would 'have gone hard with me, had I been brought 'back to my old gaol in Brest: but by good fortune, 'we were re-taken, and carried to England once 'more.

'I had almost forgot to tell you, that in this last en-'gagement I was wounded in two places; I lost four 'fingers of the left hand, and my leg was shot off. 'Had I the good fortune to have lost my leg and use 'of my hand on board a king's ship, and not a priva-'teer, I should have been entitled to clothing and 'maintenance during the rest of my life, but that was 'not my chance; one man is born with a silver spoon 'in his mouth, and another with a wooden ladle. How-'ever, blessed be God, I enjoy good health, and have 'no enemy in this world that I know of, but the 'French and the justice of peace.'

Thus saying, he limped off, leaving my friend and me in admiration of his intrepidity and content; nor could we avoid acknowledging, that an habitual acquaintance with misery, is the truest school of fortitude and philosophy.

Adieu.

LETTER CXIX.

FROM THE SAME.

THE titles of European princes are rather more numerous than ours of Asia, but by no means so sublime. The king of Visapour or Pegu, not satisfied with claiming the globe and all its appurtenances to him and his heirs, asserts a property even in the firmament, and extends his orders to the milky way. The monarchs of Europe, with more modesty, confine their titles to earth, but make up by number, what is wanting in their sublimity. Such is their passion for a long list of these splendid trifles, that I have known a German prince with more titles than subjects, and a Spanish nobleman with more names than shirts.

Contrary to this, "the English monarchs," says a writer of the last century, "disdain to accept of such "titles, which tend only to increase their pride, "without improving their glory; they are above de- "pending on the feeble helps of heraldry for respect, "perfectly satisfied with the consciousness of ac- "knowledged power." At present, however, these maxims are laid aside; the English monarchs have of late assumed new titles, and have impressed their coins with the names and arms of obscure dukedoms, petty states, and subordinate employments. Their design in this, I make no doubt, was laudably to add new lustre to the British throne, but in reality, paltry

claims only serve to diminish that respect they are designed to secure.

There is in the honours assumed by kings, as in the decorations of architecture, a majestic simplicity, which best conduces to inspire our reverence and respect; numerous and trifling ornaments in either, are strong indications of meanness in the designer, or of concealed deformity: should, for instance, the Emperor of China, among other titles, assume that of Deputy Mandarin of Maccau, or the Monarch of Great-Britain, France, and Ireland, desire to be acknowledged as Duke of Brentford, Lunenburg, or Lincoln, the observer revolts at this mixture of important and paltry claims, and forgets the Emperor in his familiarity with the Duke or the Deputy.

I remember a similar instance of this inverted ambition, in the illustrious King of Manacabo, upon his first treaty with the Portuguese. Among the presents that were made him by the ambassador of that nation, was a sword, with a brass hilt, on which he seemed to set a peculiar value. This he thought too great an acquisition to his glory, to be forgotten among the number of his titles. He therefore gave orders, that his subjects should style him for the future, *Taliphot, the immortal Potentate of Manacabo, Messenger of Morning, Enlightner of the Sun, Possessor of the whole Earth, and mighty Monarch of the brass-handled Sword.*

This method of mixing majestic and paltry titles, of quartering the arms of a great empire, and an obscure province, upon the same medal here, had its rise in the virtuous partiality of their late monarchs. Willing to testify an affection to their native country, they gave its name and ensigns a place upon their coins, and thus in some measure ennobled its

obscurity. It was indeed but just that a people which had given England up their king, should receive some honorary equivalent in return; but at present these motives are no more; England has now a monarch wholly British, and has some reason to hope for British titles upon British coins.

However, were the money of England designed to circulate in Germany, there would be no flagrant impropriety in impressing it with German names and arms; but though this might have been so upon former occasions, I am told there is no danger of it for the future; as England therefore designs to keep back its gold, I candidly think Lunenburg, Oldenburg, and the rest of them, may very well keep back their titles.

It is a mistaken prejudice in princes to think that a number of loud sounding names can give new claims to respect. The truly great have ever disdained them: When Timur the Lame had conquered Asia, an orator by profession came to compliment him upon the occasion. He began his harangue, by styling him the most omnipotent, and the most glorious object of the creation. The emperor seemed displeased with his paltry adulation, yet still he went on complimenting him, as the most mighty, the most valiant, and the most perfect of beings. Hold there, my friend, cries the lame emperor; hold there, till I have got another leg. In fact, the feeble or the despotic alone find pleasure in multiplying these pageants of vanity, but strength and freedom have nobler aims, and often find the finest adulation in majestic simplicity.

The young monarch of this country has already testified a proper contempt for several unmeaning appendages on royalty; cooks and scullions have

been obliged to quit their fires; gentlemen's gentlemen, and the whole tribe of *necessary people*, who did nothing, have been dismissed from further services. A youth who can thus bring back simplicity and frugality to a court will soon probably have a true respect for his own glory, and while he has dismissed all useless employments, may disdain to accept of empty or degrading titles.

Adieu.

LETTER CXX.

FROM THE SAME.

WHENEVER I attempt to characterize the English in general, some unforeseen difficulties constantly occur to disconcert my design; I hesitate between censure and praise: when I consider them as a reasoning philosophical people, they have my applause; but when I reverse the medal, and observe their inconstancy and irresolution, I can scarcely persuade myself that I am observing the same people.

Yet upon examination, this very inconstancy, so remarkable here, flows from no other source than their love of reasoning. The man who examines a complicated subject on every side, and calls in reason

to his assistance, will frequently change; will find himself distracted by opposing probabilities and contending proofs; every alteration of place will diversify the prospect, will give some latent argument new force, and contribute to maintain an anarchy in the mind.

On the contrary, they who never examine with their own reason act with more simplicity. Ignorance is positive, instinct perseveres, and the human being moves in safety within the narrow circle of brutal uniformity. What is true with regard to individuals, is not less so when applied to states. A reasoning government like this is in continual fluctuation, while those kingdoms where men are taught not to controvert but obey, continue always the same. In Asia, for instance, where the monarch's authority is supported by force, and acknowledged through fear, a change of government is entirely unknown. All the inhabitants seem to wear the same mental complexion, and remain contented with hereditary oppression. The sovereign's pleasure is the ultimate rule of duty, every branch of the administration is a perfect epitome of the whole; and if one tyrant is deposed, another starts up in his room to govern as his predecessor. The English, on the contrary, instead of being led by power, endeavour to guide themselves by reason; instead of appealing to the pleasure of the prince, appeal to the original rights of mankind. What one rank of men assert is denied by others, as the reasons on opposite sides happen to come home with greater or less conviction. The people of Asia are directed by precedent, which never alters; the English by reason, which is ever changing its appearance.

The disadvantages of an Asiatic government acting in this manner by precedent are evident; original errors are thus continued, without hopes of redress, and all marks of genius are levelled down to one standard, since no superiority of thinking can be allowed its exertion in mending obvious defects. But to recompense those defects, their governments undergo no new alterations, they have no new evils to fear, nor no fermentations in the constitution that continue: the struggle for power is soon over, and all becomes tranquil as before; they are habituated to subordination, and men are taught to form no other desires, than those which they are allowed to satisfy.

The disadvantages of a government acting from the immediate influence of reason, like that of England, are not less than those of the former. It is extremely difficult to induce a number of free beings to co-operate for their mutual benefit; every possible advantage will necessarily be sought, and every attempt to procure it must be attended with a new fermentation; various reasons will lead different ways, and equity and advantage will often be out-balanced by a combination of clamour and prejudice. But though such a people may be thus in the wrong, they have been influenced by an happy delusion, their errors are seldom seen till they are felt; each man is himself the tyrant he has obeyed, and such a master he can easily forgive. The disadvantages he feels may in reality be equal to what is felt in the most despotic government; but man will bear every calamity with patience, when he knows himself to be the author of his own misfortunes. Adieu.

LETTER CXXI.

FROM THE SAME.

MY long residence here begins to fatigue me; as every object ceases to be new, it no longer continues to be pleasing; some minds are so fond of variety that pleasure itself, if permanent, would be insupportable, and we are thus obliged to solicit new happiness even by courting distress: I only therefore wait the arrival of my son to vary this trifling scene, and borrow new pleasure from danger and fatigue. A life, I own, thus spent in wandering from place to place, is at best but empty dissipation. But to pursue trifles is the lot of humanity; and whether we bustle in a pantomime, or strut at a coronation; whether we shout at a bonfire, or harangue in a senate house; whatever object we follow, it will at last surely conduct us to futility and disappointment. The wise bustle and laugh as they walk in the pageant, but fools bustle and are important; and this probably is all the difference between them.

This may be an apology for the levity of my former correspondence; I talked of trifles, and I knew that they were trifles; to make the things of this life ridiculous, it was only sufficient to call them by their names.

In other respects, I have omitted several striking circumstances in the description of this country, as

supposing them either already known to you, or as not being thoroughly known to myself: but there is one omission for which I expect no forgiveness, namely, by being totally silent upon their buildings, roads, rivers, and mountains. This is a branch of science on which all other travellers are so very prolix, that my deficiency will appear the more glaring. With what pleasure, for instance, do some read of a traveller in Egypt, measuring a fallen column with his cane, and finding it exactly five feet nine inches long; of his creeping through the mouth of a catacomb, and coming out by a different hole from that he entered; of his stealing the finger of an antique statue, in spite of the janizary that watched him; or his adding a new conjecture to the hundred and fourteen conjectures already published, upon the names of *Osiris* and *Isis*.

Methinks I hear some of my friends in China demanding a similar account of London and the adjacent villages; and if I remain here much longer, it is probable I may gratify their curiosity. I intend, when run dry on other topics, to take a serious survey of the city-wall; to describe that beautiful building the mansion-house; I will enumerate the magnificent squares, in which the nobility chiefly reside, and the royal palaces appointed for the reception of the English monarch; nor will I forget the beauties of Shoe-lane, in which I myself have resided since my arrival. You shall find me no way inferior to many of my brother travellers in the arts of description. At present, however, as a specimen of this way of writing, I send you a few hasty remarks, collected in a late journey I made to Kentish Town, *and this in the manner of modern voyagers.*

'Having heard much of Kentish Town, I conceived a strong desire to see that celebrated place,

'I could have wished indeed to satisfy my curiosity 'without going thither; but that was impracticable, 'and therefore I resolved to go. Travellers have 'two methods of going to Kentish Town; they take 'coach which costs nine pence, or they may go a foot, 'which costs nothing; in my opinion, a coach is 'by far the most eligible convenience, but I was re-'solved to go on foot, having considered with my-'self, that going in that manner would be the cheap-'est way.

'As you set out from Dog-house bar, you enter 'upon a fine level road railed in on both sides, com-'manding on the right a fine prospect of groves, and 'fields, enamelled with flowers, which would won-'derfully charm the sense of smelling, were it not 'for a dunghill on the left, which mixes its effluvia 'with their odours: this dunghill is of much greater 'antiquity than the road; and I must not omit a 'piece of injustice I was going to commit upon this 'occasion. My indignation was levelled against the 'makers of the dunghill for having brought it so 'near the road; whereas it should have fallen upon 'the makers of the road for having brought that so 'near the dunghill.

'After proceeding in this manner for some time, 'a building, resembling somewhat a triumphal arch, 'salutes the traveller's view. This structure how-'ever is peculiar to this country, and vulgarly called 'a turnpike gate: I could perceive a long inscrip-'tion in large characters on the front, probably upon 'the occasion of some triumph, but being in haste 'I left it to be made out by some subsequent adven-'turer who may happen to travel this way; so con-'tinuing my course to the west, I soon arrived at an 'unwalled town called Islington.

'Islington is a pretty neat town, mostly built of 'brick, with a church, and bells: it has a small lake, 'or rather pond in the midst; though at present 'very much neglected. I am told it is dry in sum-'mer; if this be the case, it can be no very proper 'receptacle for fish, of which the inhabitants them-'selves seem sensible, by bringing all that is eaten 'there from London.

'After having surveyed the curiosities of this fair 'and beautiful town I proceeded forward, leaving a 'fair stone building called the White Conduit House 'on my right: here the inhabitants of London often 'assemble to celebrate a feast of hot rolls and butter; 'seeing such numbers, each with their little tables 'before them, employed on this occasion, must no 'doubt be a very amusing sight to the looker on, 'but still more so to those who perform in the so-'lemnity.

'From hence I parted with reluctance to *Pancrass*, 'as it is written, or *Pancridge* as it is pronounced; 'but which should be both pronounced and written '*Pangrace:* this emendation I will venture meo 'arbitrio: Παν in the Greek language signifies all, 'which added to the English word *grace*, maketh *all 'grace, or Pangrace;* and indeed this is a very proper 'appellation to a place of so much sanctity as Pan-'grace is universally esteemed. However this be, 'if you except the parish church and its fine bells, 'there is little in Pangrace worth the attention of the 'curious observer.

'From Pangrace to Kentish Town is an easy jour-'ney of one mile and a quarter: the road lies through 'a fine champaign country, well watered with 'beautiful drains, and enamelled with flowers of all 'kinds, which might contribute to charm every sense

'were it not that the odoriferous gales are often more 'impregnated with dust than perfume.

'As you enter Kentish Town, the eye is at once 'presented with the shops of artificers, such as ven- 'ders of candles, small-coal, and hair-brooms; there 'are also several august buildings of red brick, with 'numberless sign-posts, or rather pillars, in a peculiar 'order of architecture; I send you a drawing of se- 'veral, vide A. B. C. This pretty town probably 'borrows its name from its vicinity to the county of 'Kent; and indeed it is not unnatural that it should, 'as there are only London and the adjacent villages 'that lie between them. Be this as it will, perceiving 'night approach I made a hasty repast on roasted 'mutton, and a certain dried fruit called potatoes, re- 'solving to protract my remarks upon my return: 'and this I would very willingly have done; but was 'prevented by a circumstance which in truth I had 'for some time foreseen, for night coming on, it was 'impossible to take a proper survey of the country, 'as I was obliged to return home in the dark.'

Adieu.

LETTER CXXII.

TO THE SAME.

AFTER a variety of disappointments, my wishes are at length fully satisfied. My son so long expected, is arrived; at once, by his presence banishing my anxiety, and opening a new scene of unexpected plea-

sure. His improvements in mind and person have far surpassed even the sanguine expectations of a father. I left him a boy, but he is returned a man: pleasing in his person, hardened by travel, and polished by adversity. His disappointment in love, however, had infused an air of melancholy into his conversation, which seemed at intervals to interrupt our mutual satisfaction. I expected that this could find a cure only from time; but fortune, as if willing to load us with her favours, has in a moment repaid every uneasiness with rapture.

Two days after his arrival, the man in black, with his beautiful niece, came to congratulate us upon this pleasing occasion; but guess our surprise when my friend's lovely kinswoman was found to be the very captive my son had rescued from Persia, and who had been wrecked on the Wolga, and was carried by the Russian peasants to the port of Archangel. Were I to hold the pen of a novelist, I might be prolix in describing their feelings, at so unexpected an interview; but you may conceive their joy, without my assistance; words were unable to express their transports, then how can words describe it?

When two young persons are sincerely enamoured of each other, nothing can give me such pleasure as seeing them married: whether I know the parties or not, I am happy at thus binding one link more in the universal chain. Nature has, in some measure, formed me for a match-maker, and given me a soul to sympathize with every mode of human felicity. I instantly therefore consulted the man in black, whether we might not crown their mutual wishes by marriage; his soul seems formed of similar materials with mine, he instantly gave his consent, and the next day was appointed for the solemnization of their nuptials.

All the acquaintance which I had made since my arrival, were present at this gay solemnity. The little beau was constituted master of the ceremonies, and his wife, Mrs. Tibbs, conducted the entertainment with proper decorum. The man in black, and the pawn-broker's widow, were very sprightly and tender upon this occasion. The widow was dressed up under the direction of Mrs. Tibbs; and as for her lover, his face was set off by the assistance of a pig-tail wig, which was lent by the little beau, to fit him for making love with proper formality. The whole company easily perceived that it would be a double wedding before all was over, and indeed my friend and the widow seemed to make no secret of their passion; he even called me aside, in order to know my candid opinion, whether I did not think him a little too old to be married. As for my own part, continued he, I know I am going to play the fool, but all my friends will praise my wisdom, and produce me as the very pattern of discretion to others.

At dinner, every thing seemed to run on with good humour, harmony, and satisfaction. Every creature in company thought themselves pretty, and every jest was laughed at: the man in black sat next his mistress, helped her plate, chimed her glass, and jogging her knees and her elbow, he whispered something arch in her ear, on which she patted his cheek; never was antiquated passion so playful, so harmless, and amusing, as between this reverend couple.

The second course was now called for, and among a variety of other dishes, a fine turkey was placed before the widow. The Europeans, you know, carve as they eat; my friend therefore begged his mistress to help him to a part of the turkey. The widow, pleas-

ed with an opportunity of showing her skill in carving, an art upon which it seems she piqued herself; began to cut it up by first taking off the leg. *Madam*, cries my friend, *if I might be permitted to advise, I would begin by cutting off the wing, and then the leg will come off more easily.* Sir, replies the widow, give me leave to understand cutting up a fowl, I always begin with the leg. *Yes, Madam*, replies the lover, *but if the wing be the most convenient manner, I would begin with the wing.* Sir, interrupts the lady, when you have fowls of your own, begin with the wing if you please, but give me leave to take off the leg; I hope I am not to be taught at this time of day. *Madam*, interrupts he, *we are never too old to be instructed.* Old, Sir, interrupts the other, who is old Sir? when I die of age, I know of some that will quake for fear; if the leg does not come off, take the turkey to yourself. *Madam*, replied the man in black, *I do not care a farthing whether the leg or the wing comes off; if you are for the leg first, why you shall have the argument, even though it be as I say.* As for the matter of that, cries the widow, I do not care a fig, whether you are for the leg off or on; and friend, for the future, keep your distance. *O*, replied the other, *that is easily done, it is only removing to the other end of the table, and so, Madam, your most obedient humble servant.*

Thus was this courtship of an age, destroyed in one moment; for this dialogue effectually broke off the match between this respectable couple, that had been just concluded. The smallest accidents disappoint the most important treaties: however, though it in some measure interrupted the general satisfaction, it no ways lessened the happiness of the youthful couple; and by the young lady's looks I could

perceive she was not entirely displeased with this interruption.

In a few hours the whole transaction seemed entirely forgotten, and we have all since enjoyed those satisfactions which result from a consciousness of making each other happy. My son and his fair partner are fixed here for life; the man in black has given them up a small estate in the country, which, added to what I was able to bestow, will be capable of supplying all the real, but not the fictitious demands of happiness. As for myself, the world being but one city to me, I do not much care in which of the streets I happen to reside; I shall therefore spend the remainder of my life, in examining the manners of different countries, and have prevailed upon the man in black to be my companion. *They must often change, says* Confucius, *who would be constant in happiness or wisdom.*

Adieu.

END OF THE CITIZEN OF THE WORLD.

THE

PREFACE

TO

DR. BROOKES'S

NEW AND ACCURATE SYSTEM OF

NATURAL HISTORY.

PUBLISHED IN THE YEAR 1763.

PREFACE.

OF all the studies which have employed the industrious or amused the idle, perhaps Natural History deserves the preference; other sciences generally terminate in doubt, or rest in bare speculation, but here every step is marked with certainty, and while a description of the objects around us teaches to supply our wants, it satisfies our curiosity.

The multitude of Nature's productions, however, seems at first to bewilder the inquirer, rather than excite his attention; the various wonders of the animal, vegetable, or mineral world, seem to exceed all powers of computation, and the science appears barren from its amazing fertility. But a nearer acquaintance with this study, by giving method to our researches, points out a similitude in many objects which at first appeared different; the mind by degrees rises to consider the things before it in general lights, till at length it finds Nature, in almost every instance, acting with her usual simplicity.

Among the number of Philosophers, who, undaunted by their supposed variety, have attempted to give a description of the productions of Nature, Aristotle deserves the first place. This great philosopher was furnished by his pupil Alexander, with all that the then known world could produce to complete his design. By such parts of his work as have escaped the wreck of time, it appears that he understood Nature more clearly, and in a more comprehensive manner than even the present age, enlightened as it is with so many later discoveries, can boast. His design ap-

pears vast, and his knowledge extensive; he only considers things in general lights, and leaves every subject when it becomes too minute or remote to be useful. In his History of Animals, he first describes man, and makes him a standard with which to compare the deviations in every more imperfect kind that is to follow. But if he has excelled in the history of each, he, together with Pliny and Theophrastus, has failed in the exactness of their descriptions. There are many creatures described by those Naturalists of antiquity, which are so imperfectly characterized, that it is impossible to tell to what animal now subsisting we can refer the description. This is an unpardonable neglect, and alone sufficient to depreciate their merits, but their credulity and the mutilations they have suffered by time, have rendered them still less useful, and justify each subsequent attempt to improve what they have left behind. The most laborious, as well as the most voluminous Naturalist among the moderns is Aldrovandus. He was furnished with every requisite for making an extensive body of Natural History. He was learned and rich, and during the course of a long life indefatigable and accurate. But his works are insupportably tedious and disgusting, filled with unnecessary quotations and unimportant digressions. Whatever learning he had he was willing should be known, and, unwearied himself, he supposed his readers could never tire; in short, he appears an useful assistant to those who would compile a body of Natural History, but is utterly unsuited to such as only wish to read it with profit and delight.

Gesner and Johnson, willing to abridge the voluminous productions of Aldrovandus, have attempted to reduce Natural History into method, but their efforts have been so incomplete as scarcely to deserve mentioning. Their attempts were improved upon some

time after by Mr. Ray, whose method we have adopted in the History of Quadrupeds, Birds, and Fishes, which is to follow. No systematical writer has been more happy than he in reducing Natural History into a form, at once the shortest yet most comprehensive.

The subsequent attempts of Mr. Klein and Linnæus. it is true, have had their admirers, but as all methods of classing the productions of Nature are calculated merely to ease the memory and enlighten the mind, that writer who answers such ends with brevity and perspicuity is most worthy of regard. And in this respect Mr. Ray undoubtedly remains still without a rival; he was sensible that no accurate idea could be formed from a mere distribution of animals in particular classes; he has therefore ranged them according to their most obvious qualities; and content with brevity in his distribution, has employed accuracy only in the particular description of every animal. This intentional inaccuracy only in the general system of Ray, Klein and Linnæus have undertaken to amend, and thus, by multiplying divisions, instead of impressing the mind with distinct ideas, they only serve to confound it, making the language of the science more difficult than even the science itself.

All order whatsoever is to be used for the sake of brevity and perspicuity; we have therefore followed that of Mr. Ray in preference to the rest, whose method of classing animals, though not so accurate, perhaps is yet more obvious, and being shorter, is more easily remembered. In his life time he published his Synopsis Methodica Quadrupedum et Serpentini Generis, and after his death there came out a posthumous work under the care of Dr. Derham, which, as the title page informs us, was revised and perfected before his death. Both the one and the other have their merits, but as he wrote *currente calamo*, for subsistence,

they are consequently replete with errors, and though his manner of treating Natural History be preferable to that of all others, yet there was still room for a new work, that might at once retain his excellencies, and supply his deficiencies.

As to the Natural History of Insects, it has not been so long or so greatly cultivated as other parts of this science. Our own countryman Mouſett is the first of any note, that I have met with, who has treated this subject with success. However it was not till lately that it was reduced to a regular system, which might be in a great measure owing to the seeming insignificancy of the animals themselves; even though they were always looked upon as of great use in medicine, and upon that account only have been taken notice of by many medical writers. Thus Dioscorides has treated of their use in physic; and it must be owned, some of them have been well worth observation on this account. There were not wanting also those who long since had thoughts of reducing this kind of knowledge to a regular form, among whom was Mr. Ray, who was discouraged by the difficulty attending it; this study has been pursued of late, however, with diligence and success. Reaumur and Swammerdam have principally distinguished themselves on this account; and their respective treatises plainly shew, that they did not spend their labor in vain. Since their time several authors have published their Systems, among whom is Linnæus, whose method being generally esteemed, I have thought proper to adopt. He has classed them in a very regular manner, though he says but little of the insects themselves. However, I have endeavored to supply that defect from other parts of his works, and from other authors who have written upon this subject; by which means it is hoped, the curiosity of such as delight in these studies, will be in some

measure satisfied. Such of them as have been more generally admired, have been longest insisted upon, and particularly Caterpillars and Butterflies, relative to which, perhaps, there is the largest catalogue that has ever appeared in the English language.

Mr. Edwards and Mr. Buffon, one in the History of Birds, the other of Quadrupeds, have undoubtedly deserved highly of the public, as far as their labors have extended; but as they have hitherto cultivated but a small part in the wide field of Natural History, a comprehensive system in this most pleasing science has been hitherto wanting. Nor is it a little surprising, when every other branch of literature has been of late cultivated with so much success among us, how this most interesting department should have been neglected. It has been long obvious that Aristotle was incomplete, and Pliny credulous; Aldrovandus too prolix, and Linnæus too short to afford the proper entertainment: yet we have had no attempts to supply their defects, or to give an history of Nature at once complete and concise, calculated at once to please and improve.

How far the author of the present performance has obviated the wants of the public in these respects, is left to the world to determine; this much, however, he may without vanity assert, that whether the system here presented be approved or not, he has left the science in a better state than he found it. He has consulted every author whom he imagined might give him new and authentic information, and painfully searched through heaps of lumber to detect falsehood; so that many parts of the following work have exhausted much labor in the execution, though they may discover little to the superficial observer.

Nor have I neglected any opportunity that offered of conversing upon these subjects with travellers, upon

whose judgments and veracity I could rely. Thus comparing accurate narrations with what has been already written, and following either, as the circumstances or credibility of the witness led me to believe. But I have had one advantage over almost all former Naturalists, namely, that of having visited a variety of countries myself, and examined the productions of each upon the spot. Whatever America, or the known parts of Africa have produced to excite curiosity, have been carefully observed by me, and compared with the accounts of others. By this I have made some improvements that will appear in their place, and have been less liable to be imposed upon by the hearsay relations of credulity.

A complete cheap and commodious body of Natural History being wanted in our language, it was these advantages which prompted me to this undertaking. Such therefore as choose to range in the delightful fields of Nature, will, I flatter myself, here find a proper guide: and those who have a design to furnish a cabinet, will find copious instructions. With one of these volumes in his hand, a spectator may go through the largest Museum, the British not excepted, see Nature through all her varieties, and compare her usual operations with those wanton productions, in which she seems to sport with human sagacity. I have been sparing however in the description of the deviations from the usual course of production, first, because such are almost infinite, and the Natural Historian, who should spend his time in describing deformed Nature, would be as absurd as the Statuary, who should fix upon a deformed man, from whom to take his model of perfection.

But I would not raise expectations in the reader which it may not be in my power to satisfy; he who takes up a book of science must not expect to acquire

knowledge at the same easy rate that a reader of romance does entertainment; on the contrary, all sciences, and Natural History among the rest, have a language and a manner of treatment peculiar to themselves, and he who attempts to dress them in borrowed or foreign ornaments, is every whit as uselessly employed as the German apothecary we are told of, who turned the whole dispensatory into verse. It will be sufficient for me, if the following system is found as pleasing as the nature of the subject will bear, neither obscured by any unnecessary ostentation of science, nor lengthened out by an affected eagerness after needless embellishment.

The description of every object will be found as clear and concise as possible, the design not being to amuse the ear with well-turned periods, or the imagination with borrowed ornaments; but to impress the mind with the simplest views of nature. To answer this end more distinctly, a picture of such animals is given as we are least acquainted with. All that is intended by this is, only to guide the enquirer with more certainty to the object itself, as it is to be found in nature. I never would advise a student to apply to any science, either Anatomy, Physic, or Natural History, by looking on pictures only; they may serve to direct him more readily to the objects intended, but he must by no means suppose himself possessed of adequate and distinct ideas till he has viewed the things themselves and not their representations.

Copper-plates, therefore, moderately well done, answer the learner's purpose every whit as well as those which cannot be purchased but at a vast expence; they serve to guide us to the archetypes in Nature, and this is all that the finest picture should be permitted to do, for Nature herself ought always to be examined by the learner before he has done.

INTRODUCTION

TO A NEW

HISTORY OF THE WORLD;

INTENDED TO HAVE BEEN PUBLISHED

IN TWELVE VOLUMES 8vo.

BY J. NEWBERY, 1764.

TO THE PUBLIC.

EXPERIENCE every day convinces us, that no part of learning affords so much wisdom upon such easy terms as History. Our advances in most other studies are slow and disgusting, acquired with effort, and retained with difficulty; but in a well written history, every step we proceed only serves to increase our ardor: we profit by the experience of others, without sharing their toils or misfortunes; and in this part of knowledge, in a more particular manner, study is but relaxation.

Of all histories, however, that which, not confined to any particular reign or country, but which extends to the transactions of all mankind, is the most useful and entertaining. As in geography we can have no just idea of the situation of one country without knowing that of others, so in history it is in some measure necessary to be acquainted with the whole, thoroughly to comprehend a part. A knowledge of universal history is therefore highly useful, nor is it less entertaining. *Tacitus* complains, that the transactions of a few reigns could not afford him a sufficient stock of materials to please or interest the reader; but here that objection is entirely removed; an History of the World presents the most striking events, with the greatest variety.

These are a part of the many advantages which universal history has over all others, and which have encouraged so many writers to attempt compiling works of this kind, among the ancients as well as the moderns. Each invited by the manifest utility of the design; yet many of them failing through the great and unforeseen

difficulties of the undertaking. The barrenness of events in the early periods of history, and their fertility in modern times, equally serving to increase their embarrassments. In recounting the transactions of remote antiquity, there is such a defect of materials, that the willingness of mankind to supply the chasm, has given birth to falsehood and invited conjecture. The farther we look back into those distant periods, all the objects seem to become more obscure, or are totally lost, by a sort of perspective dimunition. In this case, therefore, when the eye of truth could no longer discern clearly, fancy undertook to form the picture; and fables were invented where truths were wanting. For this reason we have declined enlarging on such disquisitions, not for want of materials, which offered themselves at every step of our progress, but because we thought them not worth discussing. Neither have we encumbered the beginning of our work with the various opinions of the heathen philosophers concerning the creation, which may be found in most of our systems of theology, and belong more properly to the divine than the historian. Sensible how liable we are to redundancy in the first part of our design, it has been our endeavor to unfold ancient history with all possible conciseness; and solicitous to improve the reader's stock of knowledge, we have been indifferent as to the display of our own. We have not stopt to discuss or confute all the absurd conjectures men of speculation have thrown in our way. We at first had even determined not to deform the page of truth with the names of those, whose labors had only been calculated to encumber it with fiction and vain speculation. However, we have thought proper, upon second thoughts, slightly to mention them and their opinions, quoting the author at the bottom of the page, so that the reader who is curious about such particularities,

may know where to have recourse for fuller information.

As in the early part of history a want of real facts hath induced many to spin out the little that was known with conjecture, so in the modern part the superfluity of trifling anecdotes was equally apt to introduce confusion. In one case history has been rendered tedious from our want of knowing the truth; in the other from knowing too much of the truth not worth our notice. Every year that is added to the age of the world, serves to lenghten the thread of its history; so that to give this branch of learning a just length in the circle of human pursuits, it is necessary to abridge several of the least important facts. It is true, we often at present see the annals of a single reign, or even the transactions of a single year, occupying folios: but can the writers of such tedious journals ever hope to reach posterity, or do they think that our descendants, whose attention will naturally be turned to their own concerns, can exhaust so much time in the examination of ours? A plan of general history rendered too extensive, deters us from a study that is perhaps of all others the most useful, by rendering it too laborious; and instead of alluring our curiosity, excites our despair. Writers are unpardonable who convert our amusement into labor, and divest knowledge of one of its most pleasing allurements. The ancients have represented History under the figure of a woman, easy, graceful, and inviting; but we have seen her in our days converted, like the virgin of *Nubis*, into an instrument of torture.

How far we have retrenched these excesses, and steered between the opposites of exuberance and abridgement, the judicious are left to determine. We here offer the public an History of Mankind from the earliest accounts of time to the present age, in twelve

volumes, which, upon mature deliberation, appeared to us the proper mean. It has been our endeavor to give every fact its full scope; but at the same time to retrench all disgusting superfluity, to give every object the due proportion it ought to maintain in the general picture of mankind, without crowding the canvas. We hope therefore that the reader will here see the revolutions of empires without confusion, and trace arts and laws from one kingdom to another, without losing his interest in the narrative of their other transactions. To attain these ends with greater certainty of success, we have taken care in some measure to banish that late, and we may add gothic practice of using a multiplicity of notes; a thing as much unknown to the ancient historians as it is disgusting in the moderns. *Balzac* somewhere calls vain erudition the baggage of antiquity; might we in turn be permitted to make an apophthegm, we would call notes the baggage of a bad writer. It certainly argues a defect of method, or a want of perspicuity, when an author is thus obliged to write notes upon his own works; and it may assuredly be said, that whoever undertakes to write a comment upon himself, will for ever remain, without a rival, his own commentator. We have therefore lopped off such excrescencies, though not to any degree of affectation; as sometimes an acknowledged blemish may be admitted into works of skill, either to cover a greater defect, or to take a nearer course to beauty. Having mentioned the danger of affectation, it may be proper to observe, that as this of all defects is most apt to insinuate itself into such a work, we have therefore been upon our guard against it. Innovation in a performance of this nature should by no means be attempted: those names and spellings which have been used in our language from time immemorial, ought to continue unaltered; for,

like states, they acquire a sort of *jus diuturnæ possessionis*, as the civilians express it, however unjust their original claims might have been.

With respect to chronology and geography, the one of which fixes actions to time, while the other assigns them to place, we have followed the most approved methods among the moderns. All that was requisite in this, was to preserve one system of each invariably, and permit such as chose to adopt the plans of others, to rectify our deviations to their own standard. If actions and things are made to preserve their due distances of time and place mutually with respect to each other, it matters little as to the duration of them all with respect to eternity, or their situation with regard to the universe.

Thus much we have thought proper to premise concerning a work which, however executed, has cost much labor and great expence. Had we for our judges the unbiassed and the judicious alone, few words would have served, or even silence would have been our best address; but when it is considered that we have labored for the public, that miscellaneous being, at variance within itself, from the differing influence of pride, prejudice, or incapacity; a public already sated with attempts of this nature, and in a manner unwilling to find out merit till forced upon its notice; we hope to be pardoned for thus endeavoring to shew where it is presumed we have had a superiority. An History of the World to the present time, at once satisfactory and succinct, calculated rather for use than curiosity, to be read rather than consulted, seeking applause from the reader's feelings, not from his ignorance of learning, or affectation of being thought learned; an History that may be purchased at an easy expence, yet that omits nothing material, delivered in a style correct, yet familiar, was wanting in our lan-

guage ; and though sensible of our own insufficiency, this defect we have attempted to supply. Whatever reception the present age or posterity may give this work, we rest satisfied with our own endeavors to deserve a kind one. The completion of our design has for some years taken up all the time we could spare from other occupations, of less importance indeed to the public, but probably more advantageous to ourselves. We are unwilling therefore to dismiss this subject without observing, that the labor of so great a part of life should at least be examined with candor, and not carelessly confounded in that multiplicity of daily publications which are conceived without effort, are produced without praise, and sink without censure.

THE PREFACE

TO THE

ROMAN HISTORY,

BY

DR. GOLDSMITH.

FIRST PRINTED IN THE YEAR 1769.

PREFACE.

THERE are some subjects on which a writer must decline all attempts to acquire fame, satisfied with being obscurely useful. After such a number of Roman histories, in almost all languages, ancient and modern, it would be but imposture to pretend new discoveries, or to expect to offer any thing in a work of this kind, which has not been often anticipated by others. The facts which it relates have been an hundred times repeated, and every occurrence has been so variously considered, that learning can scarcely find a new anecdote, or genius give novelty to the old. I hope, therefore, for the reader's indulgence, if, in the following attempt, it shall appear, that my only aim was to supply a concise, plain, and unaffected narrative of the Rise and Decline of a well-known empire. I was contented to make such a book as could not fail of being serviceable, though of all others the most unlikely to promote the reputation of the writer. Instead, therefore, of pressing forward among the ambitious, I only claim the merit of knowing my own strength, and falling back among the hindmost ranks, with conscious inferiority.

I am not ignorant, however, that it would be no difficult task to pursue the same art by which many dull men, every day, acquire a reputation in History; such might easily be attained, by fixing on some obscure period to write upon, where much seeming erudition might be displayed, almost unknown, because not worth remembering; and many maxims in politics might be advanced entirely new, because altogether false. But I have pursued a contrary method, choosing the most noted period in History, and offering no remarks but such as I thought strictly true.

The reasons of my choice were, that we had no history of this splendid period in our language, but what was either too voluminous for common use, or too meanly written to please. Catrou and Rouille's history in six volumes folio, translated into our language by Bundy, is entirely unsuited to the time and expence mankind usually choose to bestow upon this subject: Rollin and his continuator Crevier, making nearly thirty volumes octavo, seem to labor under the same imputation; as likewise Hooke, who has spent three quartos upon the Republic alone, the rest of his undertaking remaining unfinished*. There only, therefore, remained the history by Echard, in five volumes octavo, whose plan and mine seemed to coincide; and had his execution been equal to his design, it had precluded the present undertaking. But the truth is, it is so poorly written, the facts so crowded, the narration so spiritless, and the characters so indistinctly marked, that the most ardent curiosity must cool in the perusal, and the noblest transactions that ever warmed the human heart, as described by him, must cease to interest.

I have endeavored, therefore, in the present work, or rather compilation, to obviate the inconveniences arising from the exuberance of the former, as well as from the unpleasantness of the latter. It was supposed, that two volumes might be made to comprise all that was requisite to be known, or pleasing to be read, by such as only examine History, to prepare them for more important studies. Too much time may be given even to laudable pursuits, and there

* Mr. Hooke's three quartos above-mentioned reach only to the end of the Gallic war. A fourth volume to the end of the Republic, was afterwards published in 1771. Dr. Goldsmith's preface was written in 1769. Mr. Hooke's quarto edition has been republished in eleven volumes octavo.

is none more apt than this, to allure the student from the necessary branches of learning, and, if I may so express it, entirely to engross his industry. What is here offered, therefore, may be sufficient for all, except such who make history the peculiar business of their lives; to such the most tedious narrative will seem but an abridgement, as they measure the merits of a work, rather by the quantity than the quality of its contents: others, however, who think more soberly, will agree, that in so extensive a field as that of the transactions of Rome, more judgment may be shewn, by selecting what is important than by adding what is obscure.

The history of this empire has been extended to six volumes folio; and I aver, that, with very little learning, it might be increased to sixteen more, but what would this be, but to load the subject with unimportant facts, and so to weaken the narration, that, like the empire described, it must necessarily sink beneath the weight of its own acquisitions.

But while I thus endeavored to avoid prolixity, it was found no easy matter to prevent crowding the facts, and to give every narrative its proper play. In reality, no art can contrive to avoid opposite defects; he, who indulges in minute particularities, will be often languid; and he who studies conciseness, will as frequently be dry and unentertaining. As it was my aim to comprise as much as possible in the smallest compass, it is feared the work will often be subject to the latter imputation, but it was impossible to furnish the public with a cheap Roman History, in two volumes octavo, and at the same time to give all that warmth to the narrative, all those colorings to the description, which works of twenty times the bulk have room to exhibit. I shall be fully satisfied, therefore, if it furnishes an interest sufficient to allure the reader to the

end; and this is a claim to which few abridgements can justly make pretensions.

To these objections there are some who may add, that I have rejected many of the modern improvements in Roman History, and that every character is left in full possession of that fame or infamy which it obtained from its contemporaries, or those who wrote immediately after.

I acknowledge the charge, for it appears now too late to rejudge the virtues or the vices of those men. who were but very incompletely known even to their own historians. The Romans, perhaps, upon many occasions formed wrong ideas of virtue; but they were by no means so ignorant or abandoned in general, as not to give to their brightest characters the greatest share of their applause; and I do not know whether it be fair to try Pagan actions by the standard of Christian morality.

But whatever may be my execution of this work, I have very little doubt about the success of the undertaking; the subject is the noblest that ever employed human attention; and instead of requiring a writer's aid, will even support him with its splendor. The Empire of the world, rising from the meanest origin, and growing great by a strict veneration for religion, and an implicit confidence in its commanders; continually changing the mode, but seldom the spirit of its government; being a constitution in which the military power, whether under the name of citizens or soldiers, almost always prevailed; adopting all the improvements of other nations with the most indefatigable industry, and submitting to be taught by those whom it afterwards subdued—this is a picture that must affect us, however it be disposed; these materials must have their value, under the hand of the meanest workman.

THE PREFACE

TO THE

HISTORY OF ENGLAND.

BY

DR. GOLDSMITH.

FIRST PRINTED IN THE YEAR 1771.

PREFACE.

FROM the favorable reception given to my Abridgement of Roman History published some time since, several friends and others, whose business leads them to consult the wants of the public, have been induced to suppose that an English history, written on the same plan, would be acceptable.

It was their opinion that we still wanted a work of this kind, where the narrative, though very concise, is not totally without interest, and the facts, though crowded, are yet distinctly seen.

The business of abridging the works of others has hitherto fallen to the lot of very dull men; and the art of blotting, which an eminent critic calls the most difficult of all others, has been usually practised by those who found themselves unable to write. Hence our Abridgements are generally more tedious than the works from which they pretend to relieve us; and they have effectually embarrassed that road which they labored to shorten.

As the present compiler starts with such humble competitors, it will scarcely be thought vanity in him if he boasts himself their superior. Of the many abridgements of our own history hitherto published, none seems possessed of any share of merit or reputation; some have been written in dialogue, or merely in the stiffness of an index, and some to answer the purposes of a party. A very small share of taste, therefore, was sufficient to keep the compiler from the defects of the one, and a very small share of philosophy, from the misrepresentations of the other.

It is not easy, however, to satisfy the different expectations of mankind in a work of this kind, calculated for every apprehension, and on which all are consequently capable of forming some judgment. Some may say that it is too long to pass under the denomination of an abridgement; and others, that it is too dry to be admitted as an history; it may be objected that reflection is almost entirely banished to make room for facts, and yet that many facts are wholly omitted, which might be necessary to be known. It must be confessed that all those objections are partly true; for it is impossible in the same work at once to attain contrary advantages. The compiler, who is stinted in room, must often sacrifice interest to brevity; and on the other hand, while he endeavors to amuse, must frequently transgress the limits to which his plan should confine him. Thus all such as desire only amusement may be disgusted with his brevity, and such as seek for information may object to his displacing facts for empty description.

To attain the greatest number of advantages with the fewest inconveniences, is all that can be attained in an abridgement, the name of which implies imperfection. It will be sufficient, therefore, to satisfy the writer's wishes, if the present work be found a plain, unaffected narrative of facts, with just ornament enough to keep attention awake, and with reflection barely sufficient to set the reader upon thinking. Very moderate abilities were equal to such an undertaking, and it is hoped the performance will satisfy such as take up books to be informed or amused, without much considering who the writer is, or envying any success he may have had in a former compilation.

As the present publication is designed for the benefit of those who intend to lay a foundation for future study, or desire to refresh their memories upon the

old, or who think a moderate share of history sufficient for the purposes of life, recourse has been had only to those authors which are best known, and those facts only have been selected which are allowed on all hands to be true. Were an epitome of history the field for displaying erudition, the author could shew that he has read many books which others have neglected, and that he also could advance many anecdotes which are at present very little known. But it must be remembered, that all these minute recoveries could be inserted only to the exclusion of more material facts, which it would be unpardonable to omit. He foregoes, therefore, the petty ambition of being thought a reader of forgotten books; his aim being not to add to our present stock of history, but to contract it.

The books which have been used in this abridgement are chiefly Rapin, Carte, Smollet, and Hume. They have each their peculiar admirers, in proportion as the reader is studious of historical antiquities, fond of minute anecdote, a warm partisan, or a deliberate reasoner. Of these I have particularly taken Hume for my guide, as far as he goes; and it is but justice to say, that wherever I was obliged to abridge his work, I did it with reluctance, as I scarcly cut out a single line that did not contain a beauty.

But though I must warmly subscribe to the learning, elegance, and depth of Mr. Hume's history, yet I cannot, entirely, acquiesce in his principles. With regard to religion, he seems desirous of playing a double part, of appearing to some readers as if he reverenced, and to others as if he ridiculed it. He seems sensible of the political necessity of religion in every state; but at the same time he would every where insinuate that it owes its authority to no higher an origin. Thus he weakens its influence, while he contends for its utility, and vainly hopes, that while free-thinkers

shall applaud his scepticism, real believers will reverence him for his zeal.

In his opinions, respecting government, perhaps also he may be sometimes reprehensible; but in a country like ours, where mutual contention contributes to the security of the constitution, it will be impossible for an historian, who attempts to have any opinion, to satisfy all parties. It is not yet decided in politics, whether the dimunition of kingly power in England tends to increase the happiness or the freedom of the people. For my own part, from seeing the bad effects of the tyranny of the great in those republican states that pretend to be free, I cannot help wishing that our monarchs may still be allowed to enjoy the power of controling the incroachments of the great at home.

A king may easily be restrained from doing wrong, as he is but one man; but if a number of the great are permitted to divide all authority, who can punish them if they abuse it? Upon this principle, therefore, and not from empty notions of divine or hereditary right, some may think I have leaned towards monarchy. But as, in the things I have hitherto written, I have neither allured the vanity of the great by flattery, nor satisfied the malignity of the vulgar by scandal, as I have endeavored to get an honest reputation by liberal pursuits, it is hoped the reader will admit my impartiality.

THE PREFACE

TO AN

HISTORY OF THE EARTH,

AND

ANIMATED NATURE,

BY

DR. GOLDSMITH.

FIRST PRINTED IN THE YEAR 1774.

PREFACE.

NATURAL History, considered in its utmost extent, comprehends two objects. First, that of discovering, ascertaining, and naming all the various productions of Nature. Secondly, that of describing the properties, manners, and relations which they bear to us, and to each other. The first, which is the most difficult part of the science, is systematical, dry, mechanical, and incomplete. The second is more amusing, exhibits new pictures to the imagination, and improves our relish for existence, by widening the prospect of Nature around us.

Both, however, are necessary to those who would understand this pleasing science in its utmost extent. The first care of every enquirer, no doubt, should be, to see, to visit, and examine every object, before he pretends to inspect its habitudes or its history. From seeing and observing the thing itself, he is most naturally led to speculate upon its uses, its delights, or its inconveniencies.

Numberless obstructions, however, are found in this part of his pursuit, that frustrate his diligence and retard his curiosity. The objects in Nature are so many, and even those of the same kind are exhibited in such a variety of forms, that the enquirer finds himself lost, in the exuberance before him, and like a man who attempts to count the stars unassisted by art, his powers are all distracted in barren superfluity.

To remedy this embarrassment, artificial systems have been devised, which grouping into masses those parts of Nature more nearly resembling each other, re-

fer the enquirer for the name of the single object he desires to know, to some one of those general distributions, where it is to be found by further examination. If, for instance, a man should in his walks meet with an animal, the name, and consequently the history of which he desires to know, he is taught by systematic writers of Natural History to examine its most obvious qualities, whether a quadruped, a bird, a fish, or an insect. Having determined it, for explanation sake, to be an insect, he examines whether it has wings; if he finds it possessed of these, he is taught to examine whether it has two or four; if possessed of four, he is taught to observe, whether the two upper wings are of a shelly hardness, and serve as cases to those under them; if he finds the wings composed in this manner, he is then taught to pronounce, that this insect is one of the beetle kind; of the beetle kind there are three different classes, distinguished from each other by their feelers; he examines the insect before him, and finds that the feelers are elevated or knobbed at the ends; of beetles, with feelers thus formed, there are ten kinds, and among those he is taught to look for the precise name of that which is before him. If, for instance, the knob be divided at the ends, and the belly be streaked with white, it is no other than the Dor or the Maybug, an animal, the noxious qualities of which give it a very distinguished rank in the history of the insect creation. In this manner a system of Natural History may, in some measure, be compared to a dictionary of words. Both are solely intended to explain the names of things; but with this difference, that in the dictionary of words we are led from the name of the thing to its definition; whereas in the system of Natural History, we are led from the definition to find out the name.

Such are the efforts of writers, who have composed their works with great labor and ingenuity, to direct the learner in his progress through Nature, and to inform him of the name of every animal, plant, or fossil substance, that he happens to meet with; but it would be only deceiving the reader, to conceal the truth, which is, that books alone can never teach him this art in perfection; and the solitary student can never succeed. Without a master, and a previous knowledge of many of the objects in Nature, his book will only serve to confound and disgust him. Few of the individual plants or animals that he may happen to meet with, are in that precise state of health, or that exact period of vegetation, whence their descriptions were taken. Perhaps he meets the plant only with leaves, but the systematic writer has described it in flower. Perhaps he meets the bird before it has moulted its first feathers, while the systematic description was made in the state of full perfection. He thus ranges without an instructor, confused, and with sickening curiosity from subject to subject, till at last he gives up the pursuit, in the multiplicity of his disappointments. Some practice, therefore, much instruction, and diligent reading, are requisite to make a ready and expert Naturalist, who shall be able, even by the help of a system, to find out the name of every object he meets with. But when this tedious, though requisite part of study is attained, nothing but delight and variety attend the rest of his journey. Wherever he travels, like a man in a country where he has many friends, he meets with nothing but acquaintances and allurements in all stages of his way. The mere uninformed spectator passes on in gloomy solitude, but the Naturalist, in every plant, in every insect, and every pebble, finds something to entertain his curiosity, and excite his speculation.

Hence it appears, that a system may be considered as a dictionary in the study of Nature. The ancients, however, who have all written most delightfully on this subject, seem entirely to have rejected those humble and mechanical helps of science. They contented themselves with seizing upon the great outlines of history, and passing over what was common, as not worth the detail; they only dwelt upon what was new, great, and surprising, and sometimes even warmed the imagination at the expence of truth. Such of the moderns as revived this science in Europe, undertook the task more methodically, though not in a manner so pleasing. Aldrovandus, Gesner, and Johnson seemed desirous of uniting the entertaining and rich descriptions of the ancients with the dry and systematic arrangement of which they were the first projectors. This attempt, however, was extremely imperfect, as the great variety of Nature was, as yet, but very inadequately known. Nevertheless, by attempting to carry on both objects at once; first, of directing us to the name of the things, and then giving the detail of its history, they drew out their works into a tedious and unreasonable length; and thus mixing incompatible aims, they have left their labors, rather to be occasionally consulted, than read with delight by posterity.

The later moderns, with that good sense which they have carried into every other part of science, have taken a different method in cultivating Natural History. They have been content to give, not only the brevity, but also the dry and disgusting air of a dictionary to their systems. Ray, Klin, Brisson, and Linnæus, have had only one aim, that of pointing out the object in Nature, of discovering its name, and where it was to be found in those authors, that treated of it in a more prolix and satisfactory manner. Thus

Natural History at present is carried on in two distinct and separate channels, the one serving to lead us to the thing, the other conveying the history of the thing as supposing it already known.

The following Natural History is written with only such an attention to system as serves to remove the reader's embarrassments, and allure him to proceed. It can make no pretensions in directing him to the name of every object he meets with; that belongs to works of a very different kind, and written with very different aims. It will fully answer my design, if the reader, being already possessed of the name of any animal, shall find here a short, though satisfactory history of its habitudes, its subsistence, its manners, its friendships and hostilities. My aim has been to carry on just as much method as was sufficient to shorten my descriptions by generalizing them, and never to follow order where the art of writing, which is but another name for good sense, informed me that it would only contribute to the reader's embarrassment.

Still, however, the reader will perceive that I have formed a kind of system in the history of every part of Animated Nature, directing myself by the great and obvious distinctions that she herself seems to have made, which, though too few to point exactly to the name, are yet sufficient to illuminate the subject, and remove the reader's perplexity. Mr. Buffon, indeed, who has brought greater talents to this part of learning than any other man, has almost entirely rejected method in classing quadrupeds. This, with great deference to such a character, appears to me running into the opposite extreme; and, as some moderns have of late spent much time, great pains, and some learning, all to very little purpose, in systematic arrangement, he seems so much disgusted by their trifling, but ostentatious efforts, that he describes his animals

almost in the order they happen to come before him. This want of method seems to be a fault, but he can lose little by a criticism, which every dull man can make, or by an error in arrangement, from which the dullest are the most usually free.

In other respects, as far as this able philosopher has gone, I have taken him for my guide. The warmth of his style, and the brilliancy of his imagination, are inimitable. Leaving him, therefore, without a rival in these, and only availing myself of his information, I have been content to describe things in my own way; and though many of the materials are taken from him, yet I have added, retrenched, and altered as I thought proper. It was my intention at one time, whenever I differed from him, to have mentioned it at the bottom of the page; but this occurred so often, that I soon found it would look like envy, and might, perhaps, convict me of those very errors which I was wanting to lay upon him.

I have, therefore, as being every way his debtor, concealed my dissent, where my opinion was different; but wherever I borrow from him, I take care at the bottom of the page to express my obligations. But though my obligations to this writer are many, they extend but to the smallest part of the work, as he has hitherto completed only the history of quadrupeds. I was therefore left to my reading alone, to make out the History of Birds, Fishes, and Insects, of which the arrangement was so difficult, and the necessary information so widely diffused, and so obscurely related when found, that it proved by much the most laborious part of the undertaking. Thus having made use of Mr. Buffon's lights in the first part of this work, I may, with some share of confidence, recommend it to the public. But what shall I say of that part, where I have been entirely left without his assistance? As I

would affect neither modesty nor confidence, it will be sufficient to say, that my reading upon this part of the subject has been very extensive; and that I have taxed my scanty circumstances in procuring books which are on this subject of all others the most expensive. In consequence of this industry, I here offer a work to the public, of a kind which has never been attempted in ours, or in any other modern language that I know of. The ancients, indeed, and Pliny in particular, have anticipated me, in the present manner of treating Natural History. Like those historians who described the events of a campaign, they have not condescended to give the private particulars of every individual that formed the army; they were content with characterising the generals, and describing their operations, while they left it to meaner hands to carry the muster roll. I have followed their manner, rejecting the numerous fables which they adopted, and adding the improvements of the moderns, which are so numerous, that they actually make up the bulk of Natural History.

The delight which I found in reading Pliny, first inspired me with the idea of a work of this nature. Having a taste rather classical than scientific, and having but little employed myself in turning over the dry labors of modern system-makers, my earliest intention was to translate this agreeable writer, and by the help of a commentary to make my work as amusing as I could. Let us dignify Natural History never so much with the grave appellation of a useful science, yet still we must confess that it is the occupation of the idle and the speculative, more than of the ambitious part of mankind. My intention was to treat what I then conceived to be an idle subject, in an idle manner; and not to hedge round plain and simple narratives with hard words, accumulated distinctions, os-

tentatious learning, and disquisitions that produced no conviction. Upon the appearance, however, of Mr. Buffon's work, I dropped my former plan, and adopted the present, being convinced by his manner, that the best imitation of the ancients was to write from our own feelings, and to imitate Nature.

It will be my chief pride, therefore, if this work may be found an innocent amusement for those who have nothing else to employ them, or who require a relaxation from labor. Professed Naturalists will, no doubt, find it superficial; and yet I should hope that even these will discover hints and remarks, gleaned from various reading, not wholly trite or elementary; I would wish for their approbation. But my chief ambition is to drag up the obscure and gloomy learning of the cell to open inspection: to strip it from its garb of austerity, and to shew the beauties of that form, which only the industrious and the inquisitive have been hitherto permitted to approach.

PREFACE

TO THE

BEAUTIES OF ENGLISH POETRY.

FIRST PRINTED IN THE YEAR 1767.

PREFACE.

MY Bookseller having informed me that there was no collection of English Poetry among us, of any estimation, I thought a few hours spent in making a proper selection would not be ill bestowed.

Compilations of this kind are chiefly designed for such as either want leisure, skill, or fortune, to choose for themselves; for persons whose professions turn them to different pursuits, or who, not yet arrived at sufficient maturity, require a guide to direct their application. To our youth, particularly, a publication of this sort may be useful; since, if compiled with any share of judgment, it may at once unite precept and example, shew them what is beautiful, and inform them why it is so: I therefore offer this, to the best of my judgment, as the best collection that has as yet appeared; though, as tastes are various, numbers will be of a very different opinion. Many, perhaps, may wish to see it in the poems of their favorite authors, others may wish that I had selected from works less generally read, and others still may wish that I had selected from their own. But my design was to give a useful, unaffected compilation; one that might tend to advance the reader's taste, and not impress him with exalted ideas of mine. Nothing is so common, and yet so absurd, as affectation in criticism. The desire of being thought to have a more discerning taste than others, has often led writers to labor after error, and to be foremost in promoting deformity.

In this compilation I run but few risques of that kind; every poem here is well known, and possessed,

or the public has been long mistaken, of peculiar merit: every poem has, as Aristotle expresses it, a beginning, a middle, and an end, in which, however trifling the rule may seem, most of the poetry in our language is deficient: I claim no merit in the choice, as it was obvious, for in all languages best productions are most easily found. As to the short introductory criticisms to each poem, they are rather designed for boys than men; for it will be seen that I declined all refinement, satisfied with being obvious and sincere. In short, if this work be useful in schools, or amusing in the closet, the merit all belongs to others; I have nothing to boast, and at best can expect, not applause, but pardon.

OLIVER GOLDSMITH.

THE RAPE OF THE LOCK.

This seems to be Mr. Pope's most finished production, and is, perhaps, the most perfect in our language. It exhibits stronger powers of imagination, more harmony of numbers, and a greater knowledge of the world, than any other of this Poet's works: and it was probable, if our country were called upon to shew a specimen of their genius to foreigners, this would be the work here fixed upon.

IL PENSEROSO.

I have heard a very judicious Critic say, that he had an higher idea of Milton's style in poetry, from the two following poems, than from his Paradise Lost. It is certain the imagination shewn in them is correct and strong. The introduction to both in irregular measure is borrowed from the Italians, and hurts an English ear.

AN ELEGY,

WRITTEN IN A COUNTRY CHURCH-YARD.

This is a very fine poem, but overloaded with epithet. The heroic measure with alternate rhime is very properly adapted to the solemnity of the subject, as it is the slowest movement that our language admits of. The latter part of the poem is pathetic and interesting.

LONDON,

IN IMITATION OF THE THIRD SATIRE OF JUVENAL.

This poem of Mr. Johnson's is the best imitation of the original that has appeared in our language, being possessed of all the force and satyrical resentment of Juvenal. Imitation gives us a much truer idea of the ancients than even translation could do.

THE SCHOOL MISTRESS.

IN IMITATION OF SPENSER.

This poem is one of those happinesses in which a poet excels himself, as there is nothing in all Shenstone, which any way approaches it in merit; and, though I dislike the imitations of our old English poets in general, yet on this minute subject, the antiquity of the style produces a very ludicrous solemnity.

COOPER'S HILL.

This poem by Denham, though it may have been exceeded by later attempts in description, yet deserves the highest applause, as it far surpasses all that went before it: the concluding part, though a little too much crowded, is very masterly.

ELOISA TO ABELARD.

The harmony of numbers in this poem is very fine. It is rather drawn out to too tedious a length, although the passions vary with great judgment. It may be considered as superior to any thing in the epistolary way; and the many translations which have been made of it into the modern languages, are in some measure a proof of this.

AN EPISTLE FROM MR. PHILIPS

TO THE

EARL OF DORSET.

The opening of this poem is incomparably fine. The latter part is tedious and trifling.

A LETTER FROM ITALY

TO THE RIGHT HONORABLE

CHARLES LORD HALIFAX, 1701.

Few poems have done more honor to English genius than this. There is in it a strain of political think-

ing that was, at that time, new in our poetry. Had the harmony of this been equal to that of Pope's versification, it would be incontestibly the finest poem in our language; but there is a dryness in the numbers, which greatly lessens the pleasure excited both by the Poet's judgment and imagination.

ALEXANDER'S FEAST;

OR THE

POWER OF MUSIC.

AN ODE, IN HONOR OF ST. CECILIA'S DAY.

This ode has been more applauded, perhaps, than it has been felt; however, it is a very fine one, and gives its beauties rather at a third or fourth, than at a first perusal.

ODE FOR MUSIC ON ST. CECILIA'S DAY.

This ode has by many been thought equal to the former. As it is a repetition of Dryden's manner, it is so far inferior to him. The whole hint of Orpheus, with many of the lines, has been taken from an obscure Ode upon Music, published in Tete's Miscellanies.

THE SHEPHERD'S WEEK,

IN SIX PASTORALS.

These are Mr. Gay's principal performance. They were originally intended, I suppose, as a burlesque on those of Philips; but, perhaps, without designing it, he has hit the true spirit of pastoral poetry. In fact, he more resembles Theocritus than any other English pastoral writer whatsoever. There runs through the whole a strain of rustic pleasantry, which should ever distinguish this species of composition; but how far the antiquated expressions used here may contribute to the humor, I will not determine. For my own part,

I could wish the simplicity were preserved, without recurring to such obsolete antiquity for the manner of expressing it.

MAC FLECKNOE.

The severity of this satire, and the excellence of its versification, give it a distinguished rank in this species of composition. At present, an ordinary reader would scarcely suppose, that Shadwell, who is here meant by Mac Flecknoe, was worth being chastised; and that Dryden, descending to such game, was like an eagle stooping to catch flies.

The truth however is, Shadwell at one time held divided reputation with this great poet. Every age produces its fashionable dunces, who, by following the transient topic or humor of the day, supply talkative ignorance with materials for conversation.

ON POETRY. A RHAPSODY.

Here follows one of the best versified poems in our language, and the most masterly production of its author. The severity with which Walpole is here treated, was in consequence of that minister's having refused to provide for Swift in England, when applied to for that purpose, in the year 1725 (if I remember right). The severity of a Poet, however, gave Walpole very little uneasiness. A man whose schemes, like this minister's, seldom extended beyond the exigency of the year, but little regarded the contempt of posterity.

OF THE USE OF RICHES.

This poem, as Mr. Pope tells us himself, cost much attention and labor; and, from the easiness that appears in it, one would be apt to think as much.

FROM THE DISPENSARY. CANTO VI.

This sixth canto of the Dispensary, by Dr. Garth, has more merit than the whole preceding part of the poem, and, as I am told, in the first edition of this work, it is more correct than as here exhibited; but that edition I have not been able to find. The praises bestowed on this poem are more than have been given to any other; but our approbation at present is cooler, for it owed part of its fame to party.

SELIM; OR THE SHEPHERD'S MORAL.

The following eclogues, written by Mr. Collins, are very pretty: the images, it must be owned, are not very local; for the pastoral subject could not well admit of it. The description of Asiatic magnificence and manners is a subject as yet unattempted amongst us, and, I believe, capable of furnishing a great variety of poetical imagery.

THE SPLENDID SHILLING.

This is reckoned the best parody of Milton in our language: it has been an hundred times imitated without success. The truth is, the first thing in this way must preclude all future attempts, for nothing is so easy as to burlesque any man's manner, when we are once shewed the way.

A PIPE OF TOBACCO:

IN IMITATION OF SIX SEVERAL AUTHORS.

Mr. Hawkins Browne, the author of these, as I am told, had no good original manner of his own, yet we see how well he succeeds when he turns an imitator; for the following are rather imitations, than ridiculous parodies.

A NIGHT PIECE ON DEATH.

The great fault of this piece, written by Dr. Parnell, is, that it is in eight syllable lines, very improper for the solemnity of the subject; otherwise, the poem is natural, and the reflections just.

A FAIRY TALE. BY DR. PARNELL.

Never was the old manner of speaking more happily applied, or a tale better told, than this.

PALEMON AND LAVINIA.

Mr. Thompson, though, in general, a verbose and affected poet, has told this story with unusual simplicity: it is rather given here for being much esteemed by the public, than by the editor.

THE BASTARD.

Almost all things written from the heart, as this certainly was, have some merit. The Poet here describes sorrows and misfortunes which were by no means imaginary; and thus there runs a truth of thinking through this poem, without which it would be of little value, as Savage is, in other respects, but an indifferent poet.

THE POET AND HIS PATRON.

Mr. Moore was a poet that never had justice done him while living; there are few of the moderns have a more correct taste, or a more pleasing manner of expressing their thoughts. It was upon these fables he chiefly founded his reputation, yet they are by no means his best production.

AN EPISTLE TO A LADY.

This little poem, by Mr. Nugent, is very pleasing. The easiness of the poetry, and the justice of the thoughts, constitute its principal beauty.

HANS CARVEL.

This Bagatelle, for which, by the bye, Mr. Prior has got his greatest reputation, was a tale told in all the old Italian collections of jests; and borrowed from thence by Fontaine. It had been translated once or twice before into English, yet was never regarded till it fell into the hands of Mr. Prior.

A strong instance how much every thing is improved in the hands of a man of genius.

BAUCIS AND PHILEMON.

This poem is very fine; and, though in the same strain with the preceding, is yet superior.

TO THE EARL OF WARWICK;

ON THE DEATH OF MR. ADDISON.

This elegy (by Mr. Tickell) is one of the finest in our language: there is so little new that can be said upon the death of a friend, after the complaints of Ovid, and the Latin Italians, in this way, that one is surprised to see so much novelty in this to strike us, and so much interest to affect.

COLIN AND LUCY. A BALLAD.

Through all Tickell's Works, there is a strain of ballad-thinking, if I may so express it; and in this professed ballad, he seems to have surpassed himself. It is, perhaps, the best in our language in this way.

THE TEARS OF SCOTLAND.

This ode by Dr. Smollett does rather more honor to the author's feelings than his taste. The mechanical part, with regard to numbers and language, is not so perfect as so short a work as this requires; but the pathetic it contains, particularly in the last stanza but one, is exquisitely fine.

ON THE DEATH OF THE
LORD PROTECTOR.

Our poetry was not quite harmonized in Waller's time; so that this, which would be now looked upon as a slovenly sort of versification, was, with respect to the times in which it was written, almost a prodigy of harmony. A modern reader will chiefly be struck with the strength of thinking and the turn of the compliments bestowed upon the Usurper. Every body has heard the answer our poet made Charles II; who asked him how his poem upon Cromwell came to be finer than his panegyric upon himself. Your majesty, replies Waller, knows, that poets always succeed best in fiction.

THE STORY OF PHŒBUS AND DAPHNE,
APPLIED.

The French claim this as belonging to them. To whomsoever it belongs the Thought is finely turned.

NIGHT THOUGHTS, BY DR. YOUNG.

These seem to be the best of the collection; from whence only the two first are taken. They are spoken of differently, either with exaggerated applause or contempt, as the reader's disposition is either turned to mirth or melancholy.

SATIRE I.

Young's Satires were in higher reputation when published, than they stand in at present. He seems fonder of dazzling than pleasing; of raising our admiration for his wit, than our dislike of the follies he ridicules.

A PASTORAL BALLAD.

The ballads of Mr. Shenstone are chiefly commended for the natural simplicity of the thoughts, and the harmony of the versification. However they are not excellent in either.

PHŒBE, A PASTORAL.

This, by Dr. Byron, is a better effort than the preceding.

A SONG.

"Despairing beside a clear stream."

This, by Mr. Rowe, is better than any thing of the kind in our language.

AN ESSAY ON POETRY.

This work, by the Duke of Buckingham, is enrolled among our great English productions. The precepts are sensible, the poetry not indifferent, but it has been praised more than it deserves.

CADENUS AND VANESSA.

This is thought one of Dr. Swift's correctest pieces; its chief merit, indeed, is the elegant ease with which a story, but ill conceived in itself, is told.

ALMA; OR THE PROGRESS OF THE MIND.

Πάντα γέλως, καὶ πάντα κονις, καὶ πάντα τὸ μηδέν·
Πάντα γὰρ ἐξ ἀλόγων ἐστὶ τὰ γιγνόμενα.

What Prior meant by this poem I can't understand: by the Greek motto to it one would think it was either to laugh at the subject or his reader. There are some parts of it very fine; and let them save the badness of the rest.

PREFACE

TO

A COLLECTION OF POEMS

FOR YOUNG LADIES,

DEVOTIONAL, MORAL, AND ENTERTAINING,

FIRST PRINTED IN THE YEAR 1767.

PREFACE.

DOCTOR FORDYCE'S excellent Sermons for Young Women, in some measure gave rise to the following compilation. In that work, where he so judiciously points out all the defects of female conduct to remedy them, and all the proper studies which they should pursue, with a view to improvement, Poetry is one to which he particularly would attach them. He only objects to the danger of perusing this charming study through all the immoralities and false pictures of happiness with which it abounds, and thus becoming the martyr of innocent curiosity.

In the following compilation care has been taken to select, not only such pieces as innocence may read without a blush, but such as will even tend to strengthen that innocence. In this little work a lady may find the most exquisite pleasure, while she is at the same time learning the duties of life; and, while she courts only entertainment, be deceived into wisdom. Indeed, this would be too great a boast in the preface to any original work; but here it can be made with safety, as every Poem in the following collection would singly have procured an Author great reputation.

They are divided into *Devotional*, *Moral*, and *Entertaining*, thus comprehending the three great duties of life; that which we owe to God, to our neighbor, and to ourselves.

In the first part, it must be confessed, our English Poets have not very much excelled. In that department, namely, the praise of our Maker, by which Poetry began, and from which it deviated by time, we

are most faultily deficient. There are one or two, however, particularly the *Deity*, Mr. Boyse; a Poem when it first came out, that lay for some time neglected, till introduced to public notice by Mr. Hervey and Mr. Fielding. In it the reader will perceive many striking pictures, and perhaps glow with a part of that gratitude which seems to have inspired the writer.

In the Moral part I am more copious, from the same reason, because our language contains a large number of the kind. Voltaire, talking of our Poets, gives them the preference in moral pieces to those of any other nation; and indeed no Poets have better settled the bounds of duty, or more precisely determined the rules for conduct in life than ours. In this department the fair reader will find the Muse has been solicitous to guide her, not with the allurements of a syren, but the integrity of a friend.

In the entertaining part my greatest difficulty was what to reject. The materials lay in such plenty, that I was bewildered in my choice; in this case then I was solely determined by the tendency of the poem; and where I found one, however well executed, that seemed in the least tending to distort the judgment, or inflame the imagination, it was excluded without mercy. I have here and there indeed, when one of particular beauty offered with a few blemishes, lopt off the defects, and thus, like the tyrant, who fitted all strangers to the bed he had prepared for them, I have inserted some, by first adapting them to my plan; we only differ in this, that he mutilated with a bad design, I from motives of a contrary nature.

It will be easier to condemn a compilation of this kind, than to prove its inutility. While young ladies are readers, and while their guardians are solicitous that they shall only read the best books, there

can be no danger of a work of this kind being disagreeable. It offers, in a very small compass, the very flowers of our Poetry, and that of a kind adapted to the sex supposed to be its readers. Poetry is an art, which no young Lady can, or ought to be wholly ignorant of. The pleasure which it gives, and indeed the necessity of knowing enough of it to mix in modern conversation, will evince the usefulness of my design, which is to supply the highest and the most innocent entertainment at the smallest expence; as the Poems in this collection, if sold singly, would amount to ten times the price of what I am able to afford the present.

END OF THE FOURTH VOLUME.

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